

Imperial cuisine restaurants give diners royal treatment as well as exotic food.

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The 16 ancient gate towers in Mentougou District provide for some close-to-home sightseeing.

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If others find relaxation and fun from travelling, this woman feels mainly disappointment and dismay.

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## City to Consolidate Epidemic Monitoring

By Xiao Rong

With an apparent downward trend in the number of new SARS cases in Beijing, fewer than 60 a day for the past seven days, steps are being taken to improve the city's monitoring system.

"We are striving to consolidate all SARS information into one database that will include three components; an epidemic reporting system, a disease situation reporting system and epidemiology reporting system," deputy director of Beijing Health Bureau Liang Wannian told *Beijing Today* yesterday.

Liang, who is the chief epidemic information officer for the city's fight against SARS, also said that a newly designed form for doctors to report basic information of every hospitalized SARS patient is to be put into use from May 20.

In the past, according to Liang, doctors were required to fill out as many as nine different forms for newly hospitalized SARS patients.

"The new forms will considerably alleviate the burden of doctors while consolidating the necessary information," he added.

Daniel Chin, a World Health Organization (WHO) consultant who is studying the epidemic in Beijing, echoed Liang's opinion saying that the current data reporting system was too complex

and that the same information had been requested by different departments.

Chin also suggested that communication between hospitals, centers for disease control and prevention, and public health administrations could be improved.

Another WHO expert, Keiji Fukuda, commented, "Beijing authorities have recognized there are several things that they have to do to improve the surveillance system. The data needs to be analyzed more quickly and more often, and data collection could be more efficient."

Fukuda also said Beijing's public health authorities could do more in terms of studying where and how people are getting infected.

"They can go back to those infected and re-interview them to try to find out the source of transmission," he told *Beijing Today*.

According to Liang, the new probable and suspected SARS cases reported each day can be mainly divided into four categories: those from the fever clinics, those from people in quarantine who had been in close contact with SARS patients, SARS cases from outside Beijing and newly infected individuals from the community at large.

"Among the four categories, the former two are under our control, while for the latter two, it is not so easy to detect or trace the disease's origins," said Liang. "But we have been keeping a close watch on the latter two groups through our epidemiology work."

Liang stressed the improvement in the way epidemiology is conducted, especially in staff training. There are now 2,500 epidemiology investigators working around the city, but the temporarily organized group still needs further training.

"It's very difficult sometimes for us to conduct epidemiology among patients or their close contacts, many of whom don't really understand what we are doing," complained Wang Lianjun, chief of the epidemiological division at the Chongwen District Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Wang said families or close contacts of some SARS patients might refuse to open their doors and his staff have to wait outside, sometimes for two or three hours. Some patients may not give accurate information about their close contacts, fearing they may be quarantined.

"People are now learning more about the quarantine measures and beginning to show basic understanding of the epidemiology. But in some cases, patients simply cannot remember clearly what they have done or everyone they have been in contact with during the two weeks before the onset of SARS," Liang said.

So while it is often difficult to trace the origins of the virus, Liang said they try to determine first all the close contacts of identified SARS cases to break the



Students from Tsinghua Academy of Fine Arts are holding a poster design exhibition to promote SARS awareness.

Xinhua Photo

chain of transmission, a method that has proved to be an effective way of containing the disease.

Besides strengthening epidemiology to help control SARS, the improvement of the overall data processing system to provide more detailed and complex information is the urgent and ultimate goal, said Liang.

"We have found that the current reporting system of cases from hospitals and district centers for disease control and prevention are indeed working," Daniel Chin emphasized, adding that SARS is a relatively new epidemic and a better solution is being sought worldwide.

Both Fukuda and Chin claimed at a press conference held by WHO in Beijing Tuesday that Chinese authorities deserved praise for the achievements that have been made so far.

Fukuda expressed his understanding as to the difficulty of Beijing to find back data that might have been misreported due to the knowledge and personnel restrictions when SARS first appeared.

Nevertheless Liang Wannian expressed his resolve to improve SARS data processing to provide information in a more timely and accurate manner in order that the authorities may make better informed decisions.

"The decreasing number of newly reported SARS cases in Beijing over the past few days has shown that the upward trend of the epidemic has been basically controlled as a result of measures taken by the central and local authorities," said Liang.

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: LI SHI

## Beijing Thanks Foreign Business

To express its gratitude and sincere thanks for the support and trust shown by the overseas business community in the face of the SARS epidemic, the municipal government published an open letter this week promising better services and closer ties in the days to come.

To all overseas-invested enterprises and representative offices of foreign enterprises in Beijing,

Since the spring of this year, Beijing has been faced by the sudden arrival of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

Thanks to the leadership of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, cooperation and understanding of the city's 13 million citizens, as well as the help of the latest science and technologies, the CPC Beijing Committee and the Municipal Government have taken strong steps

in combating the deadly disease, fundamentally changed the passive situation in the prevention and cure of SARS, and achieved preliminary progress in the battle.

In this fight against SARS, staff in overseas-invested enterprises and representative offices of foreign enterprises in Beijing have demonstrated their strong support and bravery. All the enterprises and offices were highly alert to the spreading of the disease and adopted strict efforts to protect their employees, while maintaining production and business operation.

In particular, many of you issued public statements to support our efforts and donated cash and goods, which provided strong support for our efforts to prevent the spread of the disease in the city. Therefore, we would like to express our sincere thanks and salutations to all of you, both individual staff members, as well as the enterprises and offices as a whole.

Beijing is a modern capital with a long history. The city has always been dynamic and energetic. Even in the face of the threat of SARS, the city has not stopped its pace of economic development. All preparations for the 2008 Olympic Games are in progress and on schedule. The newly elected Municipal CPC Committee and government are implementing all planned environmental regeneration measures and ini-

tatives, which is a priority of our work.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed." We strongly believe that, after the hard times of SARS, we will build up a new government with a higher credit and efficiency, and a closer relationship with you. We will continue to provide better services, to offset the negative impact brought by SARS to all of you.

At present, Beijing has entered a critical stage in the combat. Fortunately, all our citizens are united in their efforts and share the government's determination, which are fundamental elements for us to do our work well and in order. We believe that, with the united efforts and care from all sectors of society, we can achieve final success in the battle against SARS.

We hope all of your enterprises and offices are normal in business operation, and achieve greater successes in your business future.

We wish you all and your family members health, happiness and success.

Sincerely yours  
Beijing Municipal Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Commission

Beijing Investment Promotion Bureau  
China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, Beijing Sub-council  
Beijing Foreign Investors Service Center

(Edited by Zhao Hongyi)

### Background:

The SARS monitoring network in Beijing consists of an epidemic reporting system, a disease situation reporting system and an epidemiology reporting system.

The epidemic reporting system collects data on each newly hospitalized SARS patient, including both probable cases and suspected cases. On diagnosing a probable or suspected SARS case, doctors are required to report within six hours to the local district center for disease control and prevention.

After collecting and confirming all the daily reports of SARS cases from district disease control centers, the Beijing Municipal Center for Disease Control and Prevention will publicize the latest epidemic situation.

The disease situation reporting system refers to the database that records the changes in condition of each hospitalized patient.

The epidemiology reporting system covers the tracing of the virus' origins and close contacts of the patient to help break the transmission chain and protect healthy people.

The Beijing public health authorities are currently consolidating the three into one data processing system to improve efficiency and accuracy.



# Health Emergency Regulation Issued

By Tony Shaw

On Monday, the State Council published a regulation, signed by Premier Wen Jiabao, on emergency public health situations.

Public health emergencies are defined as serious epidemics, widespread unidentified diseases, food and industrial poisonings, and other serious cases endangering the health of large

numbers of people.

According to the regulation, the State Council shall set up an emergency headquarters to direct the handling of national public health emergencies and release relevant information. That body will be allowed to authorize municipal, provincial and autonomous region-level administrations to issue information when necessary.

The regulation sets strict requirements that information on possible emergencies pass from one level of government to another within less than two hours, with four to five possible steps taken before the information reaches the State Council.

People that require observation and suspected victims of infectious disease must be put into isolation, and indi-

viduals and organizations that refuse to cooperate can face police enforcement.

The regulation continues that people who report potential public health emergencies will be rewarded and medical staff who participate in treating such cases will receive government subsidies, while individuals that spread rumors will face strict penalties.

## Capital Protects Water Resources

By Hou Mingxin

In order to prevent the city's water sources from possible contamination by the SARS virus, the Beijing Environment Protection Bureau issued an emergency notice prohibiting the transfer of SARS victims to areas near the capital's main water supplies, including the Miyun and Huairou reservoirs, according to a report in Sunday's *Beijing Times*.

The notice required that suspected SARS victims and those that have had close contact with SARS patients are not allowed to such areas.

Any SARS victims found in the area of major water resources should be immediately transferred to other hospitals, continued the notice.

## City Strengthens Administration of Household Garbage

By Hou Mingxin

The Beijing Municipal Administration Committee and Beijing Municipal Administration of State Land, Resources and Housing issued an urgent notice last Wednesday, demanding the strengthening of management of household garbage disposal.

According to the notice, starting May 7, garbage chutes in local apartment buildings should be shut and not used. Different kinds of household waste will be separately collected and the garbage should be sealed during transportation.

Garbage chutes should be cleaned and disinfected before being shut. Each apartment building will be provided with sealable waste containers and communities will be asked to instruct residents on the proper use of the new bins.

Local municipal administration committees will be responsible for shutting the chutes and purchasing the waste containers, while building owners must put up the necessary money.

## Strict Standards Set for Food Delivery

By Shan Jinliang / Zhao Xinpei

While a growing number of restaurants are looking to delivery service to make up for their losses in customers due to SARS fears, the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Public Health issued eight high standards for the safety and quality of delivered food on Monday.

The new rules include food deliverers halting shipments if any employees are suspected of having SARS, all food must be delivered within three hours of being prepared, and restaurants and other food suppliers must apply for re-approval from local public health departments.

The standards are in line with China's Infectious Disease Prevention Law and Food Sanitation Law. Restaurants that are unable to meet the standards are not allowed to offer delivery service.

## Disinfecting Hotline Opens

By Shan Jinliang

On Monday, the Ministry of Public Health launched a hotline at 010-8777 9905 to allow the public to talk with experts on disinfecting against SARS from the China Center for Disease Control.

The hotline will be open daily from 8 am to 12 am and 1 pm to 5 pm. For now, the service is only being offered in Chinese.

## Parks Extend Open Hours

By Shan Jinliang

Starting May 10, all parks within Beijing with the exception of the Beijing Zoo have extended their operating hours from 13 to 15 hours a day.

Beihai, Jingshan, Zhongshan, Zizhuyuan and Taoranting parks, as well as the Summer Palace, have been opening their gates from 6 am to 9 pm, according to a notice issued by the Beijing Municipal Gardens Bureau last Friday.

## Some Students Off Campus Back to Schools

By Tony Shaw

The Beijing Municipal Education Commission announced Monday that some higher education students that had left their schools can return to their colleges or universities in groups as long as they can provide health certificates issued by local disease control centers within 14 days of their arrival.

The same day, the commission began posting records of SARS cases in colleges within the capital on its official website ([www.bjedu.gov.cn](http://www.bjedu.gov.cn)). The records are updated every day.

A few colleges in Beijing have stopped courses since late last month to prevent the spread of SARS on campus. However, nearly one third of their students left for their homes without approval and against a Ministry of Education regulation forbidding their departure from Beijing issued on April 29. The next day, the ministry asked all students outside their schools not to return to better protect campuses from the virus.

Now that the severity of the SARS epidemic is showing signs of lightening up, the commission has asked colleges with many students off-campus to tell those students to remain outside for the summer holiday. The second half of the courses for the past semester will be taught after that holiday.

**Q:** Some foreign students have expressed concerns that their schools have made no special arrangements for them regarding SARS. They are not sure if they should stay on campus or are allowed to leave. If they do leave, are they allowed to return? Will the suspension of classes continue? Are they allowed to return to their home countries and will they be allowed to return in if they do?

**A:** Foreign students in Beijing are free to go to their countries. When the SARS epidemic is eliminated in Beijing, they can come back. Relevant departments of the Chinese government have simplified the procedures for their return and reentry visa application in an effort to make their future return more convenient.

Individual schools can decide whether foreign students must stay on campus or can leave and whether classes will be suspended or resumed according to their own situations. Foreign students that attend classes with Chinese students will be dealt with in the same way as Chinese students.

By Beijing Municipal Foreign Affairs Office ([www.bjfaa.gov.cn](http://www.bjfaa.gov.cn))

## Virus Spread Contained in Rural Areas

By Shan Jinliang

China has been able to prevent the spread of SARS in its rural areas thanks to the effective measures taken by local governments, said senior officials in charge of SARS containment on Thursday. The officials added, however, that domestic medical workers and authorities are still "on high alert."

Liu Jian, vice minister of agriculture, made the remarks at a press conference held by the Information Office of the State Council. He said that few SARS patients have been found outside of cities, but it is possible the virus has been transmitted to rural areas, so containment efforts must continue.

The vice minister continued that the government has taken three key steps to contain SARS.

All suspected and confirmed SARS victims are isolated, treated and fed free of charge. The central government has allocated 2 billion yuan in special funds toward the implementation of those steps and will raise more capital if necessary.

According to Liu, migrant workers with SARS in cities are to be isolated and treated where they are, and a three-tier medical reporting network, covering the county, town, and village levels, has been established to stave off possible spread of SARS through migrant workers returning from cities.

Liu said the Chinese government has directed 1.5 billion yuan to combating SARS in the countryside, and an 800-million-yuan fund has just been established for the upgrading of rural



Liu Jian Xinhua Photo

medical facilities and improving public health education.

China will take measures to ensure there are enough rural medical workers treating SARS, through such methods as transferring doctors from affluent regions and the military to economically underdeveloped places and opening medical training programs at the county level.



A group of migrant workers from Henan boarded trains at the Beijing West Railway Station on Wednesday, bound for home. Photo by Zou Xian

## Migrant Workers Allowed to Return Home

By Shan Jinliang

Starting Tuesday, migrant workers employed at construction sites in the capital will be allowed to depart the city, to return home or otherwise, after the Beijing government lifted the ban on their movement in order to control the spread of the SARS virus.

The commission said migrants would be allowed to move if they get certification of their health from local public health departments and receive approval from their employers.

Last week, the Beijing Municipal Construction Committee penalized two construction companies that released

some of their migrant workforce, escalating concern over the possible spread of SARS to rural areas of the country.

The Shanghai Dahua Decorative Engineering Corporation employed migrant workers from Jiangsu Province but did not sign contracts with them this year. On April 7, the workers, worried about the growing SARS epidemic, asked to be paid so they could return home, but project manager Li Qin could not be found.

The government stepped in to help and the workers received their salaries on April 30, but the same day one worker was diagnosed with a

fever and hospitalized, after which four others were put into isolation. Their coworkers panicked and 101 left for their homes, thanks to the company's weak controls.

As a penalty, the committee took away the company's business license on May 11.

On May 1, over 40 migrant workers employed by Jiangsu Jianye Construction Corporation left Beijing. Project manager Lu Jibin told the committee that he tried to persuade them to stay but failed and admitted responsibility. The committee condemned the company's poor management and publicized news of the gaff.

## Lack of Capital Leads to Local Mask Overstock

By Shan Jinliang / Liu Yuan

Even though shipments of face masks are pouring into the capital from other regions of the country where demand is not as great, there are overstocks of masks produced by local firm Beijing Bedsheet Factory.

The rapid rise of suspected and confirmed SARS cases in the last month created massive demand for masks, which sold so well that many locals were unable to purchase some. The Beijing Municipal Commercial Commission issued an urgent official document to the factory on April 20, ordering it to deliver 4 million 16-layer masks before May 22. The next day, the factory signed a contract with Beijing Yishang Meijie Commerce Corporation to handle all sales.

The factory has a daily production capacity of 150,000 masks, so it was forced to run its production lines day and night,

starting April 22, to fulfill the "political task." Factory vice president Li Deshan said last Friday the company had produced over 2 million masks, adding that Yishang Meijie has not come to pick up the masks since May 7 and that production costs increased due to a hike in the price of medical gauze. According to Li, the company's overstock is worth around 4 million yuan.

Yishang Meijie's management has claimed to also have overstock problems. The company's subsidiary Jinxin Co. is in charge of distribution of the masks. Jinxin's comprehensive office director, surnamed Shi, said the company's warehouse already holds 900,000 masks and does not have room for any more.

*Beijing Today* received confirmation of the problem from a commission public relations officer surnamed Yang Tuesday. The next day he said, "The over-

stock does not indicate there is no market demand or that we do not want the masks. Right now, sufficient government capital is not in place to purchase the masks and we are applying for more government aid."

Yang added there currently are too few mask sales outlets in the city. Next week, the number will surpass 1,000, at which point mask sales will increase and the overstock issue should be resolved.

A few major mask retailers, such as Gold Elephant pharmacies and the Xi'dan Department Store, told *Beijing Today* they have been selling fewer masks in the past several days. Yang said there should be an increase in demand with the reopening of primary and middle schools, the coming College Entrance Examinations and the return of normal migrant flow to Beijing.



David Ho, developer of the cocktail treatment for AIDS talked with Liu Qian, executive deputy president of the China Academy of Medical Sciences Monday during his three-day visit to China that started from May 11.

Ho told the Chinese press Monday that he would try his best to treat SARS in conjunction with the Chinese government.

Xinhua Photo

## Government ID's People Having Close Contact

By Shan Jinliang

The Ministry of Public Health and four other government departments issued a draft regulation on last Saturday defining people who have possibly been in close contact with SARS in means of public transportation.

According to the regulation, those people identified as having been in close contact with SARS patients are to be quarantined for 14 days from the last day of possible contact with the disease.

Airline stewards and passengers seated within three rows of suspected or confirmed SARS victims are among those identified as having close contact with the virus. In planes not equipped with high air

particle filtration devices, all passengers are considered as having close contact.

The list also includes train passengers and stewards that share fully closed carriages with suspected or confirmed SARS cases or people in the same soft sleeper cars or same areas of hard seats and sleepers that are partially opened.

Anyone on a fully closed bus known to have carried suspected or confirmed SARS victims is listed as having had close contact, as are passengers within three rows of a victim's seat, as well as the driver and conductors. People who share a boat cabin with a possible SARS patient are also included on the list.





Some recovering SARS patients play cards in the corridor of a range of wards in Xiaotangshan Hospital.

Xinhua photo

# Surviving SARS

By Su Wei

Dong Yongjing has been in a SARS ambulance twice: once as the father of a SARS patient and suspected patient, the other as a confirmed SARS patient himself. When *Beijing Today* contacted him, Dong Yongjing, 44, said he would return to Xiaotangshan Hospital as a volunteer after he recovered to talk to any SARS patients who wanted to talk.

He says his daughter being transferred to a second hospital on May 6 was almost too much for him to bear. The two had been taken to Xiaotangshan in early May, his daughter as a confirmed SARS case, himself as a suspected case. Around 10 pm that day, his daughter called him to say she was being transferred, but did not know where to. "I told her that I would probably also be transferred soon."

That night he called his daughter's mobile more than 20 times to find out where she was, but could not get through.

He says he feels guilty that his daughter contracted SARS before him. "I came down with a fever and four days later, on April 17, we were both sent to Beijing No. 6 Hospital with SARS symptoms."

When he had a temperature of 39.6°C, he almost lost his consciousness. But whenever he woke, he would think of his daughter. "It did not seem to matter much if I died. But what if my daughter died?" Dong says. "How strange it is that she caught SARS but her mother is fine. She is so

young. Life for her is just beginning."

Two days later, when his temperature fell to 36°C, the first thing Dong did was call her daughter. He says he used a lot of big and empty words to encourage his daughter to be brave to live through the crisis.

He says he did not learn where his daughter had been taken till the morning after her transfer.

Dong himself confessed to *Beijing Today* about running away from the hospital. The day after his daughter was transferred, he was told that he would be interviewed by CCTV in the early afternoon and after that he could leave hospital and rest at home. "I then called everyone I know. I told my daughter she would recover soon, as I was leaving."

He sat on his hospital bed waiting for over four hours. "Finally the hospital staff told me they had made a mistake and that I was to be transferred to another hospital. I shouted, 'I do not want to take any medical treatment, I am leaving and will never come back!'" The doctors tried to prevent him from leaving, but could not.

Dong says he then sat behind his car in the hospital parking lot for over 20 minutes. "I thought I should be responsible for myself. I can leave if I want. But I had no certificate to prove that I had completely recovered. What could I say to people when they asked me why I am back?"

Then he says he thought about his

daughter. "What would she think if I ran away? She would be humiliated." So he went back to the hospital.

"Escorted" by police cars in front, behind and on either side while being transferred to the second hospital gave him a sense of going to the execution ground. "But first I was happy for I thought I would meet my daughter, or at least stay in the same hospital," he said. But he was taken to Xiaotangshan, not the hospital where his daughter was.

He says life in Xiaotangshan Hospital is simple and easy. "We have well-prepared meals; oats, milk, eggs and pastries for breakfast and different dishes for lunch and supper, as well as fruit and soft drink. And we can watch TV or phone our families."

He says he calls his daughter three or five times a day, asking her how many intravenous drips she has that day. "Then based on my experience, I would know whether her condition is improving or not." Dong says the frequency of his daughter's drips has been reduced since last Sunday. "I guess she should be leaving hospital in around 10 days."

Doctors and nurses come into Dong's ward regularly. "They talk to us, ask how we feel and how they could improve their service," he says. "How I regret that I don't even know what the doctor who looks after me looks like! I only know that his surname is Jiang."

## Doctors Serve as Councilors

By Su Wei

For He Ping, a neurologist from No.303 Hospital, Liaoning Province, the big challenge in treating SARS patients at Xiaotangshan Hospital is not the risk of contracting the disease himself, but providing spiritual comfort for patients there.

He says one patient at first refused treatment, shouting that they should "just let him die." He told the patient that his illness was not so severe, and as a young

man, he stood a good chance of recovery, but his words had little effect. Continuing to talk to him, He Ping learned the patient was afraid of dying before he had a chance to get married.

He Ping's colleague, Jiang Zhonghua, another neurologist, from No.401 Hospital Shandong Province, says some patients admit the reason they call for the doctors so frequently is that they simply want to be comforted, rather than that they actually need treatment.



Military medical staff finish work at a quarantined area.

## Recovered Patient Donates Antibodies

By Sun Ming

College student and recovered SARS patient Zhao Yang donated 200 milliliters of blood at Beijing Blood Center on Saturday. The antibodies drawn from her blood were used to treat a local doctor suffering from SARS.

The 21-year-old student from Haidian University is the first and so far the only recovered SARS patient to donate blood for this purpose in Beijing, according to the center.

"I donated my blood because I heard that the antibodies from recovered SARS patients might be effective in treating SARS," said Zhao, who made the donation two days after her release from hospital.

Zhao was diagnosed with SARS on April 22. "I took my daughter to the China-Japan Friendship Hospital on April 19. But she was given the all clear and we returned home later that day," Zhao's mother Yang Chengping told Beijing Today.

In the following two days, Yang nursed her daughter at home. On April 22, Zhao developed a high fever and was diagnosed with SARS at Wangjing Hospital.

"Yes, I'm very lucky," said the mother who was released from

quarantine on Wednesday last week, "I was very careful in my contact with her from when she started running a fever."

In Hong Kong, antibodies drawn from the blood of recovered SARS patients has cured more than 10 patients who failed to respond to standard anti-viral treatment, Xinhua News Agency reported on Wednesday last week.

It has been suggest that Beijing establish a serum bank using blood donated by recovered SARS patients, Beijing Youth Daily reported Tuesday. "It's a good idea. But it's hard to get the antibodies," said Ge Jinglai from the administration office of the Beijing Blood Center, "Up to now, Zhao Yang is the only one to come here to donate blood. We need more."

"The new treatment hasn't shown any side-effects so far, and would be even more effective if used on patients in the earlier stage of SARS," he added.

According to the center, the antibodies drawn from Zhao's blood was used to treat Ding Xiulan, deputy director of the emergency department of Renmin Hospital, but Ding died on Wednesday. "Maybe the treatment came too late to save her," said Ge.



Zhao Yang donates blood at Beijing Blood Center

Photo by Ye Chuyan

## Dull Work but Someone Has to Do It

By Xiao Rong

The trivial nature of Fan Tao-xian's work helping his local neighborhood committee with SARS prevention was almost a disappointment at first.

Before starting work as a volunteer, the 21-year-old sophomore at the China Central Academy of Drama had visions of heroically helping to alleviate the heavy burden of the medical staff battling SARS.

Inspired by a desire to work on the front line, Fan made several calls to Yangfangdian community office in Haidian District, and was eventually appointed to make entry cards for each local community resident.

"I'm now getting used to my work, though it's not so significant as that of those medical workers," says Fan.

With university classes suspended due to the SARS epidemic, Fan has more than enough free time for the three hours he spends every afternoon to help Yangfangdian neighborhood committee in their SARS prevention campaign.

Since Monday, he has made over 200 entry cards, with the aim of preventing outsiders from entering the community.

Fan says he is considering filming some SARS-related feature stories after the crisis has passed, "I just cannot help but be affected by so many touching stories."

## Volunteer Learns New Skills

By Xiao Rong

Through his work as a volunteer shopping for quarantined suspected SARS sufferers, Zhang Hongtao is learning how to bargain at the market.

"I seldom cook myself, let alone bargain at the market. But the job of shopping for those under quarantine is helping me to learn how," says the 26-year-old, one of over 100 such volunteers in Chaoyang District.

Besides buying food and daily necessities for quarantined residents in Songyu Xili community, Zhang also takes out their garbage and helps disinfect the public areas within the building.

He has helped two quarantined families since April 29, though his work was initially less than warmly welcomed.

"A quarantined man whose daughter had been confirmed to have SARS was quite cold at first, saying he didn't need any assistance. I can understand him,"

Zhang says. The second family was much more polite, thanking him for his help.

Zhang Hongtao's decision to becoming a volunteer was inspired by the words of a friend. "My friend said he doesn't want Beijing to be like this. Neither do I, though I'm not a native Beijinger. I just don't want this city to descend into panic."

Zhang, who has only been working in Beijing for two years, says he has not told most of his colleagues and friends about what he is doing.

"I have minimized my contacts with friends to avoid inadvertently spreading infection, but of course I know how to protect myself."

"The SARS crisis has greatly helped promote mutual understanding and social responsibility. I'm glad to have contributed in the fight against SARS, though my contribution has been small," he says.



Han Ping at her temporary office

## Making the Impossible Possible

By Su Wei

In the middle of the night, Han Ping wakes, gets out of bed and makes a list of everything she needs to do the following day. For the 45-year-old deputy head of Chinese medicine at Xiaotangshan Hospital, this has become almost a routine in her daily life since the hospital was set up specially to treat SARS patients on April 22.

Han says every day working as a head of administration for the military management staff of the hospital, she has the feeling she is fighting in the front line of a "battle."

The greatest challenge, she says, is satisfying the ever-grow-

ing demand for office space for the military management. "They always ask me to find something spacious, but I cannot find any spare room at all."

Over 30 medical staff of the hospital can only take a break in a blood sampling room. Han's office used to be the women's locker room.

She says they were instructed by the Beijing Municipal Government to meet all the demands of the military medical staff and never say "No!" adding, "I wish I could be a magician to produce all the things they want. If I really am unable to meet their demand, I still need to say 'I will try.'"



# Chinese Treasury Reimburses Aviation and Tourism Companies

The central government will offer reimbursement for interest on short-term loans borrowed by large-scale national civil aviation and tourism companies to finance daily operations, the Ministry of Finance said in an emergency notice on Tuesday. The ministry said the amount of reimbursement would depend on the total sum the companies borrowed. The term of the interest reimbursement is five months, from May 1 to Sept 30, and the loans must be used to finance the companies' normal operations, including payment of wages.

China National Statistic Bureau released the airline passenger numbers in April and May. In April, the number declined to 6 million, a decrease of 25.7 percent against the same month of last year. In May 1-6, the number further declined by 80 percent from last year, 80.6 percent on domestic flights, 84.5 percent on international flights and 88.1 percent on the flights to Hong Kong and Macao. China Eastern Airlines, one of the three largest carriers in China, has predicted continuing losses in the

second quarter after an operational deficit in the first three months this year. The Xi'an Tourism Group, the largest state-owned travel agency in Shaanxi Province, declared a decline in revenue of 95 percent in the first four months. Guilin Tourism Co. also reported a decline of over 90 percent in tourism to its scenic spots during the May holiday, shortened by the government from the original week to five days due to SARS. Earlier in May, the ministry of fi-

nance issued a number of administrative notices promising tax relief for small businesses involved in retailing, transport, hotels and restaurants. So far, the ministry has taken 2.7 billion yuan (\$350 million approximately) from the central government's emergency budget for the overall combating of SARS nationwide. Most of the money will be used for the free treatment of SARS patients, compensation to medical workers and purchasing of medical equipment by hospitals throughout the country. (Xinhua)

## Central Government to Assist Hong Kong's Recovery

**By Zhao Hongyi**  
China's central government will further loosen the restrictions over the residents of Guangdong Province to travel to Hong Kong and encourage more joint infrastructure construction projects between Hong Kong, Macao and Guangdong in the Pearl River Delta, according to Ms. Maria Tam Wai-chu, Hong Kong's deputy of the National Peoples' Congress, the legislative body of China. The new policies will be part of the support for the post-SARS economic recovery in Hong Kong, and will be adopted from June 1. Last month, the central government assisted Hong Kong's fight against SARS with the donation of medical equipment and SARS prevention tools.

## City Bureau Reveals Losses Caused by SARS

**By Zhao Hongyi**  
Beijing's municipal statistics bureau has revealed that the city's economic growth rate in the first four months of the year was half a percent lower than expected, and 1.7 percent down for April alone. SARS has affected the service industry most heavily, the bureau said. Revenue loss in this sector amounts to 450 million yuan so far, mainly in April. In April, the number of overseas tourists arriving in the city was 116 thousand, 59.9 percent lower than last year.

## Financial Burden Reduced for Beijing Taxi Drivers

Beijing taxi drivers will have a 50 percent reduction in the rental fees they pay to taxi companies as SARS wreaks havoc on their income. Beijing municipal traffic bureau said earlier this week that the outbreak of SARS is causing people to shun public transportation such as buses and taxis, and that this is having a devastating effect on taxi companies and drivers. The municipal financial bureau and the taxation bureau have designed supportive policies to ensure normal taxi operation and minimize economic losses. The committee said it would reevaluate the situation in the next three months to consider further policy adjustments. (Xinhua)

## Fuel Price Cut

**By Zhao Hongyi**  
To ease the burden imposed by the SARS crisis on the city's public transportation sector, the city's petroleum stations lowered the prices of all types of petroleum provided, starting from May 10. The adjusted price for diesel is now 2.65 yuan per litre, and for No.90 petroleum it's 2.63 yuan per litre.

## Restaurants and Catering Hit Hard

**By Zhao Hongyi**  
Beijing's restaurant industry saw a dramatic decrease in customers in April, the first monthly decrease since 2000, according to the city's statistics bureau. Total business volume of the sector in April amounted to 830 million yuan, a decrease of 4 percent from the same month last year. The thirty largest restaurants and food catering companies, including McDonald's, Qianjude Peking Duck, Sunfeng Food Catering and Lichang Seafood, reported an overall turnover of 190 million yuan in the month, a decrease of 16.4 percent from last year.

## Sun Donates to Beijing's SARS Fight

**By Sun Min**  
SUN Microsystems has donated equipment to China's Center for Disease Control to help build a special information reporting system for the fight against SARS in Beijing earlier this week. The donated equipment includes one SUN Fire V880 server and two Fire 280R servers. The system was put into operation on May 10. "The donation is our obligation and responsibility to help China in combating SARS," said Fred Sit, general manager of Sun Microsystems China. "SARS is our common enemy, and Sun Microsystems will be of one heart and one mind with the Chinese people in the war." Established in 1982, SUN Microsystems entered China in 1987.

## Taiwan Sets NT\$50 Billion To Fight SARS

**By Zhao Hongyi**  
Taiwan set aside a budget plan of NT\$50 billion (US\$1.43 billion) to fight the SARS outbreak Monday this week. According to the plan, 60 per cent of the fund will be used to prevent and control the disease, while 40 per cent will be used to help industries that have suffered as a result of the outbreak. The administration will scratch together NT\$7 billion with the remaining NT\$43 billion raised through borrowing. The budget is expected to obtain approval in the island's legislative body before May 23, according to local media reports.

## Economists: SARS Impact On China's Economy "Brief"

The outbreak of SARS will only have a short-term impact on China's economy, agreed economists at a forum on "SARS and Asia's Economy: Impacts and Policy Recommendations" that began in Beijing Tuesday. China is expected to be able to contain the spread of SARS, and the depressed consumption and investment of the most seriously affected service industry will be eased once the epidemic is under control. Homi Kharas, chief economist for East Asia for the World Bank, said China can transfer the SARS effects into a temporary impact through international cooperation. He said there were some positive developments in China's economy even while SARS was spreading in the country, including rapidly growing exports, a stable cash market and a rapidly growing GDP in the first quarter. Chen Xingdong, chief economist of BNP Paribas Peregrine Securities, concluded that, after analyzing the monthly performance of seven major industries in China, SARS will affect China's economy most seriously in the third quarter but the economy will rebound strongly in the fourth quarter. Chinese economist Hu Angang was also optimistic about China's economy after the SARS crisis. He predicted China's GDP growth rate will be eight to nine

percent in 2003, and that of Beijing, the most seriously affected region, will be 10 percent. So far, the worst-hit sectors have been the service industry, such as tourism and transportation. Agriculture and production industries, often called the first and second industries in the country, have remained relatively safe from harm. SARS panic has promoted the prosperity of some products and service sales, while damaging others. For example, medical and sanitation related products sales surged in the last two months. The huge domestic market provides a sustainable economic growth throughout the year. "It's hard to predict at present, depending on how long the epidemic lasts," said Li Yining, a famous economist and the president of Guanghua Management School, Beijing University. Professor Li raised the case of the 1998 flooding in the country. "In the second half of that year, thanks to the strong health of China's economy and increased investment by the central government, the whole year's economic growth reached the scheduled target after all." "The fundamental base of China's economy cannot be damaged easily," said Phil Murtagh, Chairman and CEO of the GM China. "The impact will be brief." (Compiled by Shan Jinliang)



The economic outlook workshop caught the media's eyes in a social depression caused by SARS. Xinhua Photo

## Chen Xingdong: Avoid Policy Overreaction

"In fighting against SARS, governments should prevent overreaction so as to reduce unnecessary losses to economic growth," said Chen Xindong, deputy managing director and chief economist of BNP Paribas Peregrine. "Fortunately, we are seeing governments, both the central and local ones, taking the correct actions to contain SARS, increasing the public's understanding of SARS, and reducing their fears." Chen agreed with the government's call for normal economic production and appreciated the rescue packages that are being organized, such as tax relief for travel agencies and airlines. But he remained cautious about the implementation. "We want to see detailed implementing programs and final results." (Shan Jinliang)

## Long Yongtu: Let's Make the Best of It

Long Yongtu, secretary general of the Boao Forum for Asia, said, "If SARS lasts only to the second quarter, there will be a 0.2 percent drop of GDP. If the situation cannot be controlled and lasts to the third quarter, there will be a 0.5 percent drop in GDP." A halt in investment and market demand will further consolidate the market. For instance, it eliminates small players that lack efficiency. It will also allow badly needed time for tourist resorts to regenerate. Long believes that after the SARS crisis, investors in China, both locally and abroad, will be more sensitive towards public health and the environment. "A coin has two sides," Long said. "And we can make a bad thing into a good beginning." (Zhao Hongyi)



## It's All SARS' Fault!

With the summer coming, farmers in China's central Henan Province are harvesting their crop of watermelons. Unfortunately, wholesalers and retailers in the cities, like the provincial capital Zhengzhou, are declining to accept the melons due to the threat of SARS. Farmers have approached local governments to reach a settlement. Xinhua Photo

## Motorola China Reopens Headquarters in Beijing

**By Zhao Hongyi**  
Motorola China reopened its China headquarters for business operation on May 12, after two weeks isolation because of SARS infection. Further more, the company said its global president Mike Zafirovski is to visit China next week. The company found a 33 years-old project manager in its headquarters in eastern Beijing carrying the SARS virus on April 27. The young manager was hospitalized soon afterwards and 160 colleagues received inspections and quarantine in the days after. "Fortunately, no one has infection, or symptoms," said An Weihong, the company's spokeswoman. The young manager is receiving medical treatment in the Xiaotangshan field infectious hospital built in eight days for the SARS storm. "His situation is stable at present," said Ms An. The company emphasizes its 18-stories-high headquarters in the eastern part of the city is safe now after a thorough inspection by the Beijing Center of Disease Control and Prevention. But stricter measures have been taken. All the people

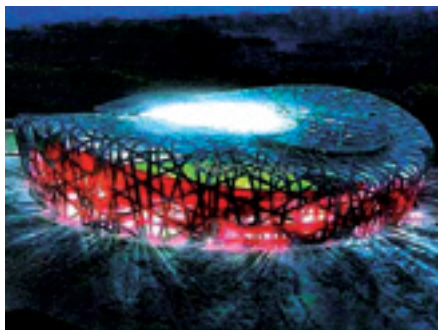
entering the tower have to take temperature readings at the entrance. Rumors said Motorola shut down its business in China during the two weeks isolation. The company issued a statement saying it was keeping staff working at home. In addition, another office tower of the company in the city's western part was still operating, and business was keeping on going without any interruption. "To be frank, we cannot say the isolation has no impact on our business," said Tim Chen, chairman and president of Motorola China. "We still have time to see whether we can cover the loss in the second half of this year." "But it's our duty to cooperate with the local government to fight against SARS, and the necessary steps taken so far have kept our staff from any infection and kept our daily business in order," said Chen. Chen told local media that Motorola's global president Mike Zafirovski is to visit China next week. His trip includes meeting with government officials and discussing the proposed technology R&D center in Beijing. "The center is still under way without any changes," said Chen.



Photo by Photocom



# National Stadium Design Selected



The model of the winning nest-like design

By Hou Mingxin

A nest-like structure has been selected as the final design for the National Stadium, the main stadium for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, the *Beijing Evening News* reported Monday.

The plan was drafted by a consortium of Switzerland's Herzog & de Meuron Architekten AG and the China Architecture Design & Research Group. The

design won eight votes from an evaluation panel made up of 13 architects and experts from five countries organized to handle the selection.

Last month, the same panel chose their favorite three designs from 13 pre-qualified candidates.

The winning design has a striking nest-like exterior, which encloses the actual stadium within curved walls of

intercrossed steel rods.

"The design is a perfect combination of elegance and simplicity," said Guang Zhao, chairman of the evaluation panel. "Every part of the stadium is functional."

The winning scheme will be the base for the final design of the stadium, with more detail architectural plans still to be drawn up, according to the *Beijing Evening News*.

The National Stadium will stand in the south of the Olympic Green and have 80,000 permanent and 20,000 temporary seats. The stadium's roof is retractable. The stadium will be the venue for the opening and closing ceremonies and track-and-field events during the 2008 Olympics.

Construction of the National Stadium is slated to start on December 24.



American Leann Olson donates blood at Beijing United Family Hospital.

Photo by Aily

## Local Expats Donate Blood

By Sun Ming

Over 50 foreign and Chinese volunteers gathered at the Beijing United Family Hospital (BJU) yesterday to donate their blood.

Blood stores in Beijing have diminished during the SARS epidemic because many people are unwilling to donate blood for fear of weakening their immune systems, according to the Beijing Red Cross.

BJU managed and sponsored the activity, and solicited blood donations from Chinese, American, British, Canadian, German and Japanese individuals. Among the expats that gave blood were embassy officials and their family members, managers of some local joint venture companies and doctors from the hospital. The blood will be deposited at the Blood Center of the Beijing Red Cross.

"I want to make a meaningful contribution to the fight against SARS," said American Leann Olson, who came to Beijing with her husband two years ago.

BJU, the first joint venture foreign hospital in China, which mainly serves expats in Beijing, will hold another blood donation activity on May 31.

## Many Foreign Students Interested in Tsinghua

By Lily Li

When the application period for foreign students to take Tsinghua University's entrance examination ended last week, more than 300 foreigners had applied for this year's test.

The number of foreign students interested in enrolling at Tsinghua University increases every year, according to Zhou Yuanqiang, head of the university's International Student Center. In 1998, there were only 401 foreign students in Tsinghua, a figure that rose to 943 by last year.

The students that applied to take the test come from 55 countries, with the most hailing from the Republic of Korea, Japan, the US, Malaysia and Indonesia.

In order to protect students' health, the entrance exams have been delayed to July 9 and 10. "But, because some students are still in Beijing, the university will still arrange small-scale examinations on the original dates of May 17 and May 18," Zhou said.

## Greenification Stumped by Road Salt

By Sun Ming/Yang Xiao

In the past several weeks, over 10,000 trees and shrubs on the sides of local streets have died from excessive soil concentration of salts used to thaw frozen roads in the winter, the Beijing Garden Research Institute told a reporter from *Beijing Youth Daily* last Friday.

"The salt concentration in the soil around some of these trees is up to 392 times higher than that in ordinary soil," said Yang Zhihua from the Beijing Garden Bureau, as quoted in the *Beijing Youth Daily* article.

Since April, nearly 3,000 white poplar trees were found dead, drawing attention from around the city to the plight of local trees.

After investigating the deaths, the Beijing Garden Bureau has concluded that the trees died from over-exposure to thaw-salt, which has high concentrations of salt and chlorine. "The damages amount to several million yuan," said Yang.

Experts from the Beijing Garden Research Institute confirmed that use of inferior thaw salt is the major reason for the death of the trees and bushes. "In addition, people like to pile snow around trees when they clear the streets, which made the situation worse," added Yang.

He continued, "We will have to remove all the completely dead trees and replace the soil around them. In the future, everyone has to be very cautious in choosing thaw salt and clearing snow."

## Xiaotangshan Hospital Construction Team Head Arrested

By Zhang Guanghua/Su Wei

At the end of last month, Gao Yingyong, team head of a Beijing construction company, was among those greatly praised by the public and the government for the construction of 508 SARS treatment wards at the Xiaotangshan Hospital in only eight days. Then, on April 30, the same day the project ended, Gao was arrested for theft by police from the Xiaotangshan Station of the Changping Branch of the Beijing Public Security Bureau.

Gao told the police that when he left the work site at around six o'clock that evening, he noticed a pile of copper pipes. "I thought they must be worth something and I could sell them off to make some money. I had no intention of damaging the project in any way," he said.

The police informed him that the pipes were to be used for the transmission of oxygen to SARS patients on respirators.

Once he set his mind to commit the theft, Gao was afraid of being caught, so he told a team of workers that the pipes belonged to his company and asked them to carry them to the roadside. "I did not ask them to put the pipes directly into my truck because I figured they might figure out what was going on," he said. When the workers move the pipes, other people on the site questioned them and called the police. Several minutes later, the police arrived and caught Gao red handed.

Gao confessed to the crime, and last Friday he was charged by the People's Procuratorate of Changping District.



Liu Chuyan and her new daughter Wang Yaxin

Photo by Wang Haixin

## Baby Born in Quarantine

By Lily Li

Wang Yaxin, a newborn girl weighing 3.2 kilograms, became the first baby in China born in a SARS quarantine zone.

She was a wonderful Mother's Day present for mother Liu Chuyan, who lives in the No. 65 courtyard of Qiantun, Xiaoying in Haidian district.

Wang Yaxin was born at 11:03 am on Sunday with the help of doctors and nurses from the Haidian Maternal and Child Care Hospital.

After a suspected SARS victim from that courtyard was sent to the hospital on April 30, all the residents of the No. 65 compound went

into a 15-day quarantine starting May 1, following local laws. Even though she was pregnant and expected on May 8, Liu Chuyan had to follow the quarantine order.

Her husband, Wang Zhigao, an employee of a nearby primary school was not allowed to return home during the period because he had not been back for two days before the quarantine began.

The anxious husband could do nothing but regularly call his wife and pray she would not give birth until the quarantine was over. The town government was aware of her condition, and town leader Yang Yongan filed a special report about

her with Wang Ling, dean of the Haidian Maternal and Child Care Hospital.

On May 10, Liu still was showing no signs of going into labor, but then on Sunday morning she began to get a strong stomachache. She contacted the hospital, which immediately rushed a team of doctors and nurses to her home to oversee the delivery.

When news that the baby was safely born came down from the apartment, Wang, previously pacing around the compound, jumped for joy, and the crowd that had gathered around the building broke into applause.

## Beer Maker Gets Bitter Lesson

By Chen Ying

Last Sunday, Beijing Five Star Beer, a subsidiary of Tsingdao Brewery Group, was forced by the Beijing Health Bureau to destroy all the new Banlangen beer it had produced since April 27, a total of over 37,000 bottles.

The beer was deemed illegal because of its special ingredient, the herb *banlangen* (indigowood root), a common ingredient in traditional Chinese medicines for preventing common colds. Many over-the-counter Chinese SARS prevention medicines sold in the past few weeks also include banlangen.

However, according to the national Food Health Law, medicine cannot be added to food or beverage products. It is on that grounds that the local bureau forced Five Star to pitch the illegal brew.

The same legal statute continues that exceptions can be made for raw materials, seasonings and nutritional additives that are traditionally seen as both food and medicine products.

"Hops, another herb, is used in the brewing of all beer," according to an article issued by Tsingdao Beer's office of the secretary of the board of directors and published on the company's website. The article says that the banlangen beer is one of Five Star's new line of flavored beers, which has been in development since the end of last year. Other new flavors include green tea, chrysanthemum and bitter melon.

"Five Star did not produce this beer with the intention of earning

fast profits. The beer was not promoted as being effective in preventing SARS and is priced the same as the company's other products," adds the article.

According to Tsingdao's management, Five Star got permission to produce the beer from the Beijing Technique Supervision Bureau on March 1. The company started bottling banlangen beer in April, with the controversial ingredient mainly used as a flavor adjuster in place of hops.

Disposal of the 100 tons of beer has led to losses of over 100,000 yuan for Five Star.

Later this month, the company is slated to release another new brew, honeysuckle beer. According to the article on Tsingdao's website, "Honeysuckle can be used as both food and medicine."



Five Star employees pour tons of illegal beer down the drain.

Photo by Huang Liang

## Court Slaps Hand of Bear Burner

By Ivy Zhang

Liu Haiyang, a Tsinghua University student who poured sulphuric acid on two Asiatic black bears at the Beijing Zoo last February, causing severe injury to both animals, was sentenced by the Xicheng district court recently, according to the May 7 issue of *Beijing Youth Daily*.

The court found Liu guilty of deliberate vandalism, but did not impose any criminal punishment.

In the two-hour court hearing, the focuses of debate were whether the bears should be regarded as property or as state-class endangered animals, as well as whether Liu's act was premeditated or a spur-of-the-moment experiment.

The judgement has proven controversial, with some people saying it sets a dangerous precedent. An article run in the Guangzhou-based newspaper *Yangcheng Evening News* on May 4 raised the question of what penalty should people pay for harming wild animals?

The writer of the article concluded that the authorities must have seen Liu as a promising college student who committed the act just to see what would happen, and thus decided to sentence him lightly. However, the article argues such a judgement only encourages barbaric acts against protected wild animals.

"They are lying to themselves if they think that a college student would not know the consequences of pouring acid onto the bears and then insist it was not a premeditated act," continued the report.

## Mayor Takes Time to Respond to Foreign Youth

By Lily Li

Michelle Florciuz, 12, daughter of Jaime Florciuz, a CNN reporter living in Beijing, wrote to Wang Qishan, Beijing acting mayor last Friday. In her letter, Michelle said her family loves Beijing and hopes the city will win its fight against SARS.

The next day, the mayor answered her letter and promised that SARS would be brought under control as soon as possible.

In the letter, she enclosed 861 yuan as a donation for people in need.

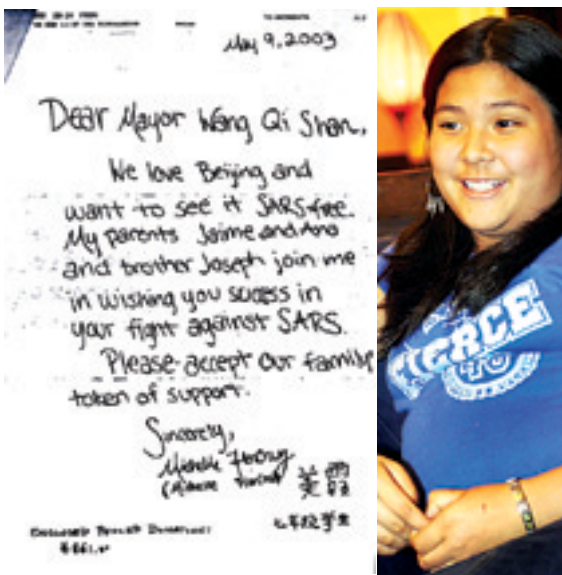


Photo by Qian Bingge

### Acting Mayor Wang Qishan's Response:

May 10, 2003  
Dear Michelle,  
I have received your letter, which is childish but full of faith and hope, and your donation of 861 yuan. In the past few weeks I have received many letters and donations like yours from children from Beijing and all over the country. While the letters all move me deeply, they also make me feel a heavier sense of responsibility.

You may be a foreign child, but I know you grew up in Beijing, and that makes you one of our citizens. Your deep love for Beijing and your hopes for success in the fight against SARS show that you not only have a good heart, but also a very mature sense of social responsibility.

I assure you and all the children in Beijing that the day when this city is SARS-free will come as soon as humanly possible.

Please take care of yourself, that is an important part of the fight against SARS, and give my best wishes to your family.

May you be healthy and happy!  
Wang Qishan  
Acting Beijing Mayor



# Students Fleeing SARS Expelled

By Sun Ming

When a few students decided to flee the campus of Shenyang University and head home during the SARS outbreak, the university decided to expel them for disobeying regulations.

The action has aroused debate around the country since it was publicized by *Times Business*, a local newspaper in Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning Province, on Wednesday last week.

**The students were neither SARS patients nor were they in quarantine. There is no law that can restrict their freedom to move. — Wang Jianwei**

“The university issued two notices on April 25,” said the report in the paper. “They said, ‘during this key period in the fight against SARS, these students defied the regulations of the university by going back to their homes without asking permission.’ Four students will be expelled and six others have received disciplinary warnings.”

**As a teacher, I can imagine how hard it was for the university to make such a decision. I agree the students should be disciplined, but they shouldn’t be expelled. — Ma Longsheng**

A reporter from *Times Business* interviewed ten students from Shenyang University and four parents on Monday last week. They all thought the students should be punished, but as to the degree of the punishment, they had different opinions.

Four students and all four parents supported and praised the decision of the university, but the six other students thought that expulsion was too harsh.

**Students from SARS areas could threaten the safety of the people in their hometown by going back there. Also, they could be infected by SARS on the way home, because most of them have to take the train. — Fang Milan**

A number of universities around the country, especially in cities with severe SARS outbreaks, also had students who rushed home, despite requests to stay on campus to avoid spreading the disease.

Should Shenyang University expel the students who left without asking permission? What kind of punishment should these ‘deserters’ get? Different people have different ideas: **A staff member in the Student Administration Office of a university in Beijing**

I don’t agree with Shenyang University’s decision; it’s too cruel. My university also punished two students who left without asking permission last month. They were heads of the Student Union. But we didn’t expel them, we just removed them from their positions.

It’s not an easy thing to become a university student in our country. Millions of high school students prepare for the difficult entrance exam-

inations to universities every year. And Shenyang University is a renowned seat of learning. It’s really a pity for the expelled students.

Also, on Monday last week, the Ministry of Education issued a notice as to how to educate and manage the students who had fled their universities.

The notice reads: “Universities should be understanding of students who left without asking permission. Every university should take effective measures to educate and manage students who have already gone home.

After the notice was issued, many universities in Beijing said they wouldn’t punish students who left. As far as I know, up to now, Shenyang University is the only university in China that has expelled students for this.

**You Guohua, a journalist in Xiamen, Fujian Province**

You can’t have rights in society without being responsible to society.

University students have it too easy, just because it’s still hard to become a university student in China.

Under these circumstances, university students should have a heightened sense of responsibility. Instead of doing something to fight against SARS, they escaped to their hometown, like deserters. It’s shameful.

Some people say that we should be more understanding of them. But they are around 20 years old. They can be called adults. They know what they are doing.

**Wang Jianwei, a lawyer from Beijing Litong Legal Firm**

I was shocked to hear this news. How can a university make such a decision so easily? They didn’t even give the students an opportunity to explain or apologize. Why were they so impatient?

The students didn’t violate any law. They just wanted to seek a safe place. We should understand them.

The right to life is one of the most basic rights for citizens. For example, if people heard that an earthquake would come, they would have the right to leave.

The students were neither SARS patients nor were they in quarantine. There is no law that can restrict their freedom to move.

It’s ridiculous for some people to criticize them for lacking a sense of responsibility. They conducted themselves within the limits of the law, which means they have not violated their social responsibility.

**Ma Longsheng, a high school teacher in Beijing**

As a teacher, I can imagine how hard it was for the university to make such a decision. I agree the students should be disciplined, but they shouldn’t be expelled.

Students would be aware of the epidemic, but it doesn’t mean they have the right to break the regulations of their schools. And actually it’s safer for them to stay at school than to take public transportation to go home.

But on the other hand, we shouldn’t neglect the background situation. Administration departments of universities didn’t limit their students’ movement until around April 25. At the very beginning of the spread of SARS, the attitude of most universities including Shenyang, was just

“Students had better stay at school and not go out.” So students had the option to leave at that time.

**Fang Milan, deputy manager of Beijing Hongyu Company**

I was frequently touched when I heard about young soldiers who fought against floods and forest fire in recent years. They were the same age as university students, but for the safety of others they neglected their own safety. In the fight against SARS, many students from military medical universities also volunteered to work in the front lines.

Compared with them, the deserter students are shameful and irresponsible. It’s entirely appropriate for Shenyang University to expel them. Maybe it’s cruel, but at a time like this, special measures are called for.

Students from SARS areas could threaten the safety of the people in their hometown by going back there. Also, they could be infected by SARS on the way home, because most of them have to take the train.

**Wu Yiou, a student from Beijing Technology and Business University**

At this time, out of town students tend to be more nervous than local students who can go home easily. Facing a crisis, most people want to go home. So I understand these students who left school without asking permission. Many out of town students in Beijing’s universities also escaped to their hometown last month, but it seems that the heads of Beijing’s universities are more open and understanding of the students.

**Wu Yi, director of Beijing Langjiayuan Community Committee**

Just when the whole of society is fighting SARS, these college students acted like refugees to escape to their hometown. This phenomenon reflects the drawbacks in higher education. High schools usually only pay attention to teaching students how to pass examinations, but they neglect developing students’ character.

## Voices on the Internet

**Laocao**

*I have many friends who just graduated from university. They told me that they definitely wouldn’t go back to their hometown because the medical services there are much worse than in Beijing. They also said it would be terrible if they took the virus back to their hometown. All students should have a sense of responsibility. If they haven’t, they don’t deserve to be college students at all. So I support Shenyang University’s decision to expel the deserters.*

**Flyingen**

*Do universities have the right to restrict our freedom? We have to stay at school day and night. But why do our teachers have the right to go in and go out freely? Is SARS afraid of them?*

**Sjes66**

*Will we overcome the epidemic by expelling students? Also, the SARS situation in Shenyang is not so serious.*

**Kanye**

*During the fight against SARS, stricter punishments are necessary.*

By Chen Ying

Majoring in education used to be a good way of cutting down on university fees. This idea could soon be out of date, at least in Guangdong.

According to the Guangdong Province Education Office, students of education at normal universities will have to pay the same tuition fees as other students from this September. The education major used to carry just half the usual fee, partly because it was unpopular and because the government wanted to encourage the development of top teachers. Another change is that education majors will have no restriction on their choice of employment after graduating.

“Training teachers won’t be the normal universities’ duty henceforth. We will put a teacher qualification system into practice. So no matter which university a student graduates from, they will only be able to become a teacher if they get a teacher qualification certificate,” said Luo Weiqi, director of the Guangdong Province Education Office. For the time being, students of agriculture and mining will still enjoy half-price tuition.

Student fees were low after the government resumed national college entry examination at the end of the

**In my mind, students may like to be a teacher now, but they don’t want to teach in the countryside or in mountain areas. This will make the situation in China more extreme: the education quality becomes better and better in cities while kids in the countryside have to accept worse and worse education. —Yu Hui**

1970s. But the government launched some educational reforms at the beginning of the 1990s which involved significantly higher tuition fees. Some majors still had lower fees because few people wanted to take them and the government had to adopt some measures to attract students to these courses. A number of local administrations are now going to scrap this policy.

“Now all students will have to pay 4,800 yuan for tuition per academic year, at least in our university,” said Yu Lianjie, a spokesperson for the admission office of Beijing Normal University.

Is this a good idea? Is now the right time? Opinions follow:

**Yu Hui, student in South China Normal University in Guangzhou**

The normal universities don’t need to attract freshmen by reducing tuition any more. For one thing, there are a lot more teachers now. Also teachers’ situation is better than ever. As a job, it’s stable, the salary is reasonable and teachers enjoy a good reputation.

A country needs talent if it wants to modernize and develop its economy. So education is the key. Though the national government has paid much attention to education, teachers’ salaries used to be pretty low. That’s why those universities had to reduce tuition fees to attract students.

But these days, more young people have accepted the value of a teacher and want to consider it as an occupation. This new step may also be a sign that China will put more energy and investment into education. Maybe education will become a hot major for freshmen soon.

**Yuan Jiewei, Internet surfer**

I don’t think the market for teachers has become saturated. And does charging the same fees mean the government is going to pay more attention to education?

Enhancing the requirement for teachers means their quality will be improved while teachers’ treatment should also be improved. That’s why so many non-education-major students want to get a job in a school after graduation. Undoubtedly, it will make the education industry more competitive.

But it only happens in cities. The education situation is still poor in rural areas.

Most teachers in countryside areas only graduated from high school. Do countryside schools not need high level teachers? The need for highly educated teachers is still urgent.

In my mind, students may like to be a teacher now, but they don’t want to teach in the countryside or in mountain areas.

So now, education majors have even more reason not to want to teach in those areas since they have to pay the full tuition fees. This means the quality of teachers in the countryside is likely to deteriorate. Meanwhile, some students from poor areas who dreamed of going to college by taking the cheaper education option will lose their opportunity.

This will make the situation in China more extreme: education quality becomes better and better in cities while kids in the countryside have to accept worse and worse education.

**Wang Shumin, former teacher in a normal school**

It’s true that the education gap is great between urban and rural areas. But it’s unreasonable to assume that normal universities collecting full tuition fees from students will make the gap larger. The gap has been growing larger since the 1970s even with the preferential policy for education majors.

The fact that there are many unqualified teachers in rural areas is largely due to lack of funds.

But the education gap between urban and rural areas is unavoidable, just like the gap between the country’s west and eastern regions. It can’t be eliminated in a short time. The education level in the countryside wouldn’t be improved greatly by encouraging top teachers to go there. The gap can only be reduced if the rural economic level catches up with that of the cities.

## SOUND BITES

*“The way they’re doing it is they are destroying evidence. It’s an absolutely shameful failure on the part of the US government.”*

— Peter Bouckaert, a researcher with Human Rights Watch, criticized Wednesday the US-led administration in Iraq for not sending any forensic experts to Hillah in central Iraq or allowing local people to excavate a mass grave, exhuming the remains of up

to 3,000 people they suspect were killed during the 1991 Shiite revolt against Saddam Hussein’s regime.

*“Those people who have done this believe in nothing but hatred.”*

— Mike Thomas, a 28-year-old tennis instructor from Wales living in Saudi Arabia. Nonesential US diplomats were ordered out of Saudi Arabia and other Westerners made plans

to leave Wednesday after coordinated suicide attacks linked to Al-Qaeda killed at least 25 bystanders at compounds housing foreigners. Thomas visited one of the targeted compounds Wednesday to check on his students

*“We were delighted when the palace agreed to a set of commemorative stamps being released to mark this special occasion. We expect these strik-*

*ing images of Prince William will have worldwide appeal with both the public and collectors alike.”*

— Gavin Macrae, director of stamps and collectibles at the Royal Mail. Prince William, the eldest son of the late Princess Diana and second in line to the British throne, is to have his 21st birthday on June 21 marked with an issue of stamps and coins. Twenty million stamps are to be printed.



# Stamp Forgery Rampant

By Liu Yuan/Emma Ma

It used to be that only stamp collectors were really bothered by forgeries, as they mainly turned up in rare stamp markets. Now they're everywhere. New technology has given rise to a thriving stamp forgery market and China's State Post Bureau (SPB) has warned it could become a disaster for the entire mailing system.

"Almost all kinds of stamps issued by the SPB, whether precious or just for daily use, can be found in black markets now," said An Ding, deputy director of the Industry Regulation Department of the SPB. She revealed there had been a number of forgery cases detected in Liaoning, Sichuan, Zhejiang, Henan, Shanxi and Hebei in recent years.

**"This is getting out of hand. If forgery can not be curbed, the flooding of counterfeit stamps onto the market will disrupt the whole mailing system."**

## Problem getting worse

"The introduction of advanced printing equipment has accelerated forgery to a new scale," An said.

The biggest case last year in Chongqing, Sichuan Province uncovered over 3,000 kinds of counterfeit stamps with a total value of 160 million yuan.

The forger, Xiao Jianjun, once a stamp dealer, said he was tempted by the quick and easy profit he could make. He hired two university students to help him create fake versions of rare, limited edition stamps which were issued just after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

In Xiao's printing workshop, police officers spent several days taking stock of his extensive equipment, including 500 kilograms of printed stamps.

"There have been many other cases in which fake stamps worth over a million yuan have been picked up," An said. "The problem is that stamp forgery has grown from a small-scale nuisance into or-

ganized crime."

Last October, a joint action by police and Dalian's post bureau in Liaoning Province unearthed a counterfeiting gang who had been selling stamps in Shanghai, Liaoning and several other provinces. Among the things they found were 11 commemorative stamps worth a total of eight million yuan.

The organization had built up an extensive network that covered the whole process from plate making, printing, sales and transportation. The counterfeit stamps were sold in Shanghai and then distributed all over the country. Ten members of the gang have been caught so far.

An showed Beijing Today some pictures taken at one of the gang's processing factories in Cangnan, a remote village in Zhejiang Province. The workshop is hidden from view in a paddy field. When the police arrived at the scene, they found several men hard at work forging new stamps. "We found they had advanced technology for forgery including scanning, enlarging, color coding, plate making, printing...everything that a standard printing line would have," An said. So it has also become harder to differentiate real stamps from false ones. The police also found that the criminals could use the same printing equipment to forge fake money. A printing block for 2 yuan notes was found in the workshop.

## Rampant

"In one case, a mailman took ten letters from the postbox. Six had false stamps and two had stamps that had been covered in glue so they could be 'recycled'. Only the remaining two letters had normal stamps." Xia Liquan, a spokesman for the SPB gave this example at a press conference in March this year to indicate the spread of the culture of stamp crime.

Last December, a stamp dealer in Zhejiang named Chen confessed he had purchased a batch of stamps which were forgeries. Police followed up the case and eventually confiscated fake stamps worth 142.5 thousand yuan in Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang Province.

According to Chen, the stamps were purchased from Shantou, Guangdong at a discount of 40 percent. He then sold them in Zhejiang and Jiangsu for 0.5 yuan each. The



Police found a batch of counterfeit stamps in Zhengzhou, Henan Province this January.

Photo by photocome

stamps included the most commonly used "China Bird" and "Sight in Beidaihe" series.

Also last year, the post bureau in Zhongshan, Guangdong found that in one day, more than 300 letters with false stamps were sent from a local shoe market. Further investigation found another 2,000 letters sent from the same place with fake stamps.

It turned out that fake stamp peddlers had posted ads in the area offering discounted fake stamps. People just had to call the contact number in the ads and the stamps would be delivered to their door.

"This is getting out of hand. If forgery can not be curbed, the flooding of counterfeit stamps onto the market will disrupt the whole mailing system," said An.

While cracking down on forgery production lines, there is also the problem of "recycled stamps".

Police recently traced a man who advertised "reconditioned" used stamps in Tongxiang,

Zhejiang Province.

The ads said "Used Envelopes for Brand-new Stamps", "Used Envelopes Wanted". They offered "three used envelopes in exchange for a new stamp; must be at least 1,000 envelopes."

The culprit, surnamed Yu, told the police his processing procedure: he soaked the envelopes with water, tore off the used stamps after the glue had been softened and then cleared away the postmark after drying the stamps in the sunshine.

Yu's marketing tactics were also convincing. He sent advertising letters using his "recycled stamps" to potential customers, telling them "I used my products to pay the postage." The police uncovered more than 3,000 kilograms of old envelopes, 36 kilograms of "recycled stamps" and 840 advertising letters in Yu's workshop.

Following Yu's confession, the police arrested a vendor in Nanning, Guangxi Province who sold a kind of "effective stamp cleaner". Five kilograms

of this cleaner and thousands of pamphlets on how to remove the postmark were uncovered.

But it's not only hardened criminals who engage in stamp fraud. "Students also 'recycle' stamps," An said.

In each peak season like Christmas, New Year or Spring Festival, postmen always find a lot of the stamps are covered with glue. The receivers, after clearing off the postmark easily with an eraser, can then re-use the stamps.

Another trick used by students is covering the stamps with transparent adhesive tape. The postmark is sealed on the tape which can then be torn off.

"Do they do it to save money or just for a kick? We still don't know. But we must cooperate with schools to let students know this is a crime," An said.

## Fighting the forgers

According to China's law, a letter will not be sent if it's got a fake stamp on it and the sender will be fined 10 times

the cost of postage.

"The laws are not easy to enforce," An said, "because the users of counterfeit stamps are mainly scattered peasant workers, small companies and students; it's often difficult to find these people."

"But some measures can be taken," An added. "In addition to adding counterfeit-proof features to stamps issued in the future, we have strengthened supervision procedures."

In the middle of March this year, training on how to identify false stamps was held for 30 postal supervisors from all over the country.

"The forgers have become more and more cautious, so it's getting harder to find them. Most cases detected thus far have been reported by the public," An said. "At present, we focus our work on cracking down on illegal factories. Our future target is to detect one or two cases amounting to several million yuan each year, to show the forgers we mean business."

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**When the war in Iraq ended last month, reconstruction of the country became the focus of the international community. The United States and its allies are seeking swift United Nations approval for lifting sanctions on Baghdad. The resolution was discussed at the UN Security Council session yesterday.**

**Beijing Today interviewed an Iraqi businessman who often comes to Beijing last week.**

# Going Home to Iraq

By Ivy Zhang

Sameer Shakir (anonymous), a 59-year-old Iraqi businessman, is about to make an emotional return to the country he left 26 years ago.

He left Baghdad, his hometown, in 1973 and hasn't returned since 1977, shortly before Saddam Hussein became president.

He felt that life under the Baath regime was becoming intolerable.

But now he is happy and excited at the prospect of being reunited with his extended family and wants to share in rebuilding his home country.

"My family has some land and property," he said. "I'll see if I can bring projects or investment to Iraq. Many people like me will go back. I'll keep my home in London and I'll have a home in Baghdad."

Shakir was born and grew up in a middle class family in Baghdad. When he was in high school, he won a government scholarship and went to study in England from 1960 to 1966.

After getting a degree in electronics, Shakir went back to Iraq and worked at the government's Electricity Administration for five years, and then he went to work for an oil company, a desirable option for many Iraqis at that time.

He was one of very few people specializing in computers and was in charge of the first commercial computer installation in Iraq. He had a good job and good pay at the oil company. He could have worked there for the rest of his life.

But he became determined to leave the country as it became more and more controlled by the ruling Baath party, which came to power in a coup in 1968. "Everybody was under pressure to join the Party," says Shakir.

"Everything you did, they knew about. In every place we worked, there were party members and they wrote reports about anything you said and did. They had detailed reports and files on everybody."

In 1982, Shakir's sister-in-law Hanan (25 years old at the time) was working for Iraqi Airways. In the office one day somebody made a mild joke about Saddam. She said it was a stupid joke that shouldn't be told in the office. Two days later, the security people arrested her for not reporting the incident to the Party. The person who told the joke was jailed for six years. Hanan and others who listened but failed to report it were sentenced to one and a half years in prison. Hanan left a six-month-old baby behind while she served her time.

To escape the oppressive atmosphere, Shakir left Iraq and went to Britain in 1973. In the first few years, he traveled between Baghdad and London from time to time, but the situation was getting worse. He stopped visiting Baghdad in 1977 shortly before Saddam Hussein became President in 1979.

Shakir's father, Sayyid Shakir, also a businessman, was put in prison in 1986. "The security people resented his success in business because he was not a Party member" said Shakir. The

old man was sentenced to five years and six months in jail on a trumped up charge - he was accused of overcharging for a tube of toothpaste in one of his shops.

"The accusation was false. They knew he did not do this," said Shakir. The family, which is respected and well known in Iraq, hired good lawyers and fought the case and forced it to go to a higher court where it was dismissed. Shakir's father was set free, but not before the old man suffered a stroke in jail. He spent two and a half months in intensive care in a hospital.

When Shakir left Iraq, he left behind his two sons, five and seven years old then, with their mother, hoping they could join him later. But Shakir didn't see them for 13 years. His sons were not allowed to travel and Shakir could not risk going back to Iraq.

After finishing their studies at university in Iraq, the two young men were conscripted into the army.

The younger one, born in 1968, managed to leave the country before the 1991 Gulf War by paying US\$500 after serving six months in the army. But the elder one, born in 1966, had to fight in the war.

Half way during the war, most of his comrades abandoned their unit and went home, and so did he. After the war, the government was forced to disband many military units under the terms of the ceasefire, and he was one of those discharged. Shakir went to Jordan, got his son a British passport and brought him to London.

Shakir is relatively lucky in that he did not lose any of his immediate family members during the Saddam years. But his brother-in-law Asaad was taken prisoner of war in Iran leaving Shakir's sister to care for two babies for nine years until he was released. Also, his cousin Ahmed was crippled during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988).

"My family's suffering is small compared to the tragedies other people have suffered," said Shakir. One of his friends had a 17-year-old son. One night the police came to their home and took the son away. They never saw him again. To this day they have no idea what happened to him.

Shakir is not surprised that the recent war ended so quickly. "It's not because Iraqis can not fight. They proved they could fight ferociously during the Iran war in the 1980's. This time they did not want to," he said.

After the war, Shakir believes the oil in Iraq will be sold in the international market and the money will be used to rebuild his country. If some American companies benefit from the oil industry or rebuilding contracts, "Well, this is a price we can pay for our freedom," says Shakir.

Shakir's current concern is the power vacuum in Baghdad. "Ultimately we should have free elections under UN observers. The security situation in Baghdad especially is bad now in the aftermath of the war, but I am going next week anyway and I am optimistic about the future. I hope I can do business between Iraq and China," he said.



Nine hunters were caught with more than 700 Tibetan antelopes they had killed.

Xinhua Photos

## Tibetan Antelope Poachers Caught

By Ivy Zhang

Two armed gangs hunting Tibetan antelopes were caught at Kekexili Nature Reserve close to the border of Qinghai Province and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region last Friday.

The two gangs had killed a total of 712 of the endangered animals, about 70% of which were females bearing unborn babies.

This is the first case in which two illegal hunting groups have been caught on the same day since the reserve area was set up five years ago, according to Cai Ga, director of Administration of Kekexili Nature Reserve.

It is also the biggest case in the past two years in terms of numbers of dead antelopes. Nine of the men were unemployed farmers from Qinghai and

Xinjiang.

Now is the season for Tibetan antelopes to migrate eastwards from Xinjiang to the reserve area in Qinghai. The season begins in May and ends in July. Hunters usually hide near the place where the antelopes often stop to take a rest during their trek.

On the morning of May 5, when seven members of the reserve patrol team were on their monthly routine inspection tour, they came to the north of the reserve bordering Xinjiang. They found traces of people they suspected to be hunters, like noodle packages, empty bottles and cigarette butts. They followed the trail and caught four hunters who had with them 200 antelope skins.

"We also found truck tire tracks on the road," said Cai Ga. The team went on following the tracks and caught up with another five hunters 100 kilometers away. Shots were fired as the patrol group engaged the hunters, but there were no casualties. The criminals now face up to 15 years in prison.

There are about 50,000 to 70,000 Tibetan antelopes inside the uninhabited reserve, which covers an area of 84,000 square kilometers.

Illegal hunting cases have declined in recent years. "Tens of thousands of antelopes used to be hunted every year in the past. Things are getting better now," said Cai Ga. "There were no cases of illegal hunting last year. This is the third and biggest case this year."

Tibetan antelope skins are traded for about 400 yuan each in the local market.

Cai Ga said the biggest problem they face is that they are poorly equipped. He said they relied heavily on donations from companies such as Ericsson which has given six jeeps and 1,500,000 yuan to the reserve over the past three years. "Things might have got worse without these donations," he said.



A little Tibetan antelope

## Suspect in Murder of Millionaire Caught

Edited by Ivy Zhang

Tang Shaohua, the 29-year-old chief suspect in the murder of a Chinese millionaire, has been caught in Hunan after two weeks on the run thanks to a local resident screening program for SARS.

In the afternoon of April 18, Chen Shixian, an influential figure in Thailand and Macao, was found murdered in his room at the Hotel Lisboa, Macao's biggest casino, with gambling chips worth 7 million patacas (843,000 US dollars) plus tens of thousands of Hong Kong dollars stolen.

Chen's body was found by hotel staff calling to clean the room. One of his assistants, who had been bound and gagged, was not hurt. Police believed Chen had been murdered by the burglar.

Based on a joint investigation by police in Macao and Guangdong, Tang, who comes from Hunan, was named as the key suspect in the case and listed as a Class A escaped criminal by China's Public Security Ministry.

Hunan public security bureau announced On May 7 that Tang was caught on a train bound from Changsha to Shenzhen on April 30 and that the casino chips, Hong Kong dollars and Ro-

### Who was Chen Shixian?



lex watch had also been found.

An accomplice named Zhu who helped Tang escape from Macao has also been caught.

According to the Shenzhen-based *Modern Business* newspaper, Tang, born in 1974 in Hengyang county, Hunan, was expelled from high school before graduation. In 1997, he was jailed for two years for theft. After being set free, Tang went to Shenzhen

Born in 1932 in Chaoyang, Guangdong Province, Chen Shixian had to quit school at the age of 12 due to poverty and went to Thailand alone to make a living a few years later.

At first he did odd jobs in tea houses and banks. While working at a bank, he came to know a lot of top people in business and political circles, enabling him to get ahead in his career.

In the 1970s, Chen established a career in tourism in Thailand, Hong Kong and Macao and later got into the real estate business.

Chen was president of the Thai-Chinese Journalist Welfare Fund and a big donor to Chinese public causes including education, culture and disaster relief.

in 1999, since when his family has lost track of him.

On April 20, two days after the murder, Tang sneaked back to his hometown Hengyang and hid at home.

Nine days later, medical care workers from the sanitary bureau of Hengyang county discovered during their door-to-door screening that on his way home, Tang had come through Guang-

dong where SARS is thought to have originated. They asked Tang to go to the local hospital to have an examination.

Afraid that he might be caught, Tang decided to run away.

He cut his hair short, shaved off his beard and disguised himself. He then got on a train bound for Shenzhen on April 29.

But the Hunan public security bureau had been tipped off that Tang might take the train. About 5 am the next day, Tang was caught by police on the train.

Tang confessed that he had paid three visits to the casino to inspect the situation on April 15 and 17. He followed Chen for a while and formed a plan.

Around 8:30 on April 18, Tang walked into the hotel carrying a pistol equipped with a silencer and a military dagger. He happened to see Chen going towards the VIP room for a rest. He followed him and broke into the room after Chen's men came out.

He shot Chen three times. As he was about to leave the room, carrying Chen's casino chips and cash, he saw the Rolex watch around Chen's wrist. He went back to pick it up and found Chen was still alive. He shot Chen again in the face and then left.



By Zhao Pu

The outbreak of SARS hasn't got in the way of Li Xiaoxi's routine. Every week, she and her husband visit the Summer Palace and help pick up the garbage tossed around the place by the tourists.

This ranks as one of the smaller efforts she has made in her crusade to protect China's natural environment. Not so long ago she succeeded in saving 25,000 poplar trees along the Jingmi River which were about to be cut down and the Weitang Wetland in Shunyi County.

#### Depressing change

Li's deep love of nature comes from her childhood. She was born in 1945 near Mount Qian, part of the Chanbai Mountain range in northeast China. Though her home was in the suburbs of the famous "steel capital" Anshan in Liaoning Province, Li clearly remembers the clean water, blue sky, beautiful forests and wildlife she could find.

"I spent most of my spare time after class around the mountain, looking for various kinds of flowers and small animals." She also went swimming and boating in the lake on the top of the mountain in summer time.

"The happiest times for me were when I was surrounded by nature when I was young, but now when I go home there's not much left," she says sadly. "I can hardly recognize my hometown. The sky is not so blue, the water is not clear anymore and the forest area is shrinking."

In 1964, Li left home for college. She majored in English in the PLA Institute of Foreign Languages in Zhangjiakou, Hebei Province. After graduation she witnessed people's excessive exploitation of the forest for fuel in her whole working in Hainan and felt extremely angry.

"In 1960s and 70s, the natural environment in our country was still okay. Starting



# Eco-Warrior Woman

from the late 1970s, it got worse and worse," says Li. She started teaching International Diplomatic Relations in the PLA Aeronautical Institute in 1972. Work often took her around the country. She noticed that the natural environment of the whole country began to deteriorate in the late 1970s.

"People were busy cutting trees down and hunting wild animals. Rivers were polluted by new factories, and the air was no longer pure, especially in industrial areas. People's lives became more and more about consuming and garbage hills were piled up in almost every corner," she says. "Ever since, the environment has been degraded at an astonishing speed."

#### Different perspective

Since the end of the 1980s Li has been a committed

environmentalist. What she finds most depressing is that China is repeating the same mistakes other countries have made in their over-exploitation of natural resources: destroy first, repair afterwards. "That is so stupid!" she says. "Although we make economic progress, the sacrifice of our natural environment is too costly."

"A new factory can pollute a river and the entire environment around it," she says. "For example, there is an article in a text book for elementary school depicting the beautiful scene of the Dian lake in Kunming, Yunnan Province. But it was written in the 1960s. If you visit the lake now, you will find a totally different picture, of course a very unpleasant one. The lake has been polluted by factories on its banks."

Li doesn't like travelling. If others get relaxation and fun from travelling, she feels mainly disappointment and dismay. "I have a different perspective from tourists," she says. What she pays attention to are environmental problems. Whenever she finds people harming the natural environment, she won't stand by. "I'll go up to stop them, or I'll write to their administrative organs."

In the past few years, Li has written hundreds of letters to the authorities in different areas, appealing for them to look into various environmental problems. "My first letter was to the governor of Hunan Province in the early 1990s," she remembers. She saw an ad for "shooting live animals with a real gun" in a forest near Changsha during a trip to Hunan. Li talked to the owner of this business but he dismissed her complaints. So she wrote to the governor of Hunan. She didn't receive any response.

"Most of my letters got no reply at the beginning, but I still wrote them," says Li. The first governor who wrote back to her was Huang Ju, the former mayor of Shanghai in the early 1990s. Li found local people in Chongming Island in Shanghai were eating swans so she wrote to the mayor. "He wrote back to me, thanking me for my opinion. He said he would investigate and take necessary measures." This gave Li some encouragement; she felt her rights as a citizen had been respected.

#### Uncontrollable impulse

Li says she always has a kind of "uncontrollable impulse" to stop people disrespecting the environment: spitting, leaving garbage around, cutting trees or selling birds.

"I have to do something, or I'll feel uneasy for a long time," she says. This impulse has caused her many troubles and dangers, as some listeners are not that patient. Once Li passed a bird market near



Li Xiaoxi erases illegal advertisements on the bridge at the Summer Palace.

Photos by Zhuang Jian

Xizhimen. She saw a man selling owls, pheasants and other wild birds. "I felt so sorry for those owls, they were bound together in a line by the seller," Li recalls. "They should be free, instead of being maltreated by that cruel peddler."

Li bought all the owls for 300 yuan and then set them free. The peddler said to her in a sarcastic tone, "You are so softhearted! So how about this? From next week I will catch owls and wait for you to buy and set them free?" "You had no right to catch and sell these birds!" she answered angrily. "Why not? It's my job. I make my money from these owls. It's none of your business!" Li tried to argue with him but her firm opinions provoked the man. He shouted at her and threatened to beat her up. The man had to be held back by the public.

This kind of situation has become ordinary for Li in her efforts to protect the environment. She found it was necessary to educate people. "It requires communication skills," she reveals. "I realized that I had to respect people who harm the environment and try to be polite and milder in my approach. Suggestion is better than criticism."

Now, Li will pick up the garbage by herself, and then she will go up to the person who threw it and say: "Would you please throw trash into the garbage bin next time? Give a little more thought for the street cleaners. They spend time and energy to clean the street, we should respect their labor." In most cases the listeners can accept her lessons, and they'll promise to be more considerate in future.

In particular. In 1998, the local government decided to cement the river bed of the Jingmi River of Beijing in order to prevent water seeping away. This meant the 25,000 trees along the river banks would have to be destroyed.

Li immediately started researching this project. After consulting a number of specialists, she reached the conclusion that the government's decision to cement the riverbed was inappropriate and would be disastrous for the environment. So she began two years of negotiations with the Bureau of Water Conservancy to talk them out of the plan.

"I lost count of how many times I went to the bureau. Every time I went there, they would groan and say 'it's her again,'" she smiles. Though Li didn't succeed in getting the whole project called off, the 25,000 trees were saved.

In October 2001, Li found out that the Weitang Wetland in Shunyi County had been bought by a development company and was going to be turned into a golf course. She visited the 3,000-acre wetland and saw some of the many kinds of wildlife there. She was horrified by the plan to level it all into a golf course. "In a city with a serious lack of water, a wetland area is much more important than a golf course." She published articles in newspapers, and talked with both the local government and the company. "I know they want to make a profit. But isn't there a way to get the profit and preserve the wetland at the same time?" she asked.

Li worked out a plan to build a wetland park instead of the golf course in the Weitang Wetland, which was at last accepted by the development company. "Communication is important, I also thought of their interests," she says.

Li's term as a representative has only half a year left, till the end of this year. And the chance for reappointment is very narrow, according to Li. What does she have in mind for the remaining time? "I'll talk with relevant governmental organs, summing up their work in the past several years and give out my suggestions for their future work in the field of environmental protection," she says. This firebrand hasn't finished yet.



Li Xiaoxi picks up the garbage at the Summer Palace.





Detail of the roof after restoration



Gate towers, or Guojielou, were once a common architectural form in towns and villages. Evolving from the purely defensive structures of ancient times, these often highly ornate constructions were based on an arched or square gateway, sometimes with a memorial hall above. Usually a gate tower marked the entrance to a village or stood at the foot of a mountain. Some had gates that were locked to safeguard the village at night, some held statues of Buddha or other deities in the memorial hall where people worshiped and made offerings and some were built purely as decorative structures.



Detail of the roof before restoration

# Ancient Gate Towers in the Mountains of Mentougou

By Iris Miao

Hidden away in the villages of Mentougou District, west of Beijing, are 16 *Guojielou*, or gate towers. Some are in good repair, some are in desperate need of renovation, all are in their own way, unique.

"There used to be more gate towers in Mentougou district, almost every village had one," Liu Yiquan, director of the Mentougou District Cultural Relics Protection Bureau, told *Beijing Today*. Like those gate towers that once stood in downtown Beijing, most were demolished in the course of street widening in the 1950s.

Of the 16 surviving gate towers, the oldest, in Wanfotang, was built in 1576; Liuliqu gate tower, built with the same glazed tiles that adorn the roofs of the Forbidden City, is the only one on the municipal protection list; and the most distinguished, Quanmen gate tower, is soon to undergo renovation.

Liu Yiquan has conducted a detailed survey of each of the gate towers. Fourteen of the 16 remain in relatively good condition, making Mentougou District the home to the greatest number of well preserved gate towers in Beijing Municipality.

The gate towers are scattered throughout the district; some with one story, some with two; some with a square gate, some with an arch. Most stand at the entrance of a village and take the name of that village.

The most magnificent surviving gate tower is the Lantern Pavilion at Liuliqu.

Also known as the Three Gods Pavilion (Sanguan Ge), after the altar to the three gods of fortune in the memorial hall, the gate tower was traditionally adorned with colorful lanterns to mark Lantern Festival, on the 15th day of the lunar new year.

It was first built in 1756, in the 21st year of Emperor

Qianlong's reign. Liuliqu, literally "colored glaze canal," was famed for the glazed tiles that came from its kilns, and the gate tower was known for its splendid glazed tiles and decorations. A divine elephant stands at the center of the roof ridge, carrying a treasure bottle on its back, symbolic of "peace

and tranquility." Two dragons swim among green waves at either end of the roof ridge, and divine beasts decorate the roof corners. The magnificent design of the whole roof is evidence of the skill of the local artisans. The gate tower was first renovated during the reign of Emperor Guangxu

(1875-1908), and was renovated again in 1995.

The oldest gate tower, at Wanfotang, was built in 1576, in the 40th year of Emperor Wanli's reign. Above the arched gate are inscribed five characters "Pledge Never to Divide the Hearth", a simple wish of villagers in ancient

times. Traces can be seen of the gate that would have been locked at night, providing security to the villagers.

Shichangcun gate tower was built in 1580. The village was famous for its high-quality dark blue granite, and during the Ming Dynasty, a quarry was established there. Gate towers were built at the east and west of the village as a protective measure. Today, only the east gate tower remains.

Quanmen Gate tower was built by merchants from Shanxi during the Qing Dynasty. It was constructed with bricks and stones, with the lower walls inlaid with green and yellow glazed tiles.

There were three memorial halls, dedicated to the God of Medicine, the God of Official Ranks and Guandi, patron guardian of business. The gate tower was built on a road along which coal was transported during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Scores of coalmines were once to be found around the gate tower and the area to its west.

The special feature of Quanmen gate tower was the gate itself. Unlike other gate towers, which featured just one gate, this one had three. The canal that ran beneath it was called Mentougou, after which the district was named.

Today, only the central of the three gates remains. The two side gates are long gone, victims to flooding and road widening.

"Since finances available for renovation are limited, all we can do for now is to undertake emergency repairs, rather than carry out an overall reconstruction," says Liu Yiquan.



The Liuliqu gate tower

Photos provided by Liu Yiquan

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# The Lighter Side of SARS

By Yu Shanshan

While it may be coming under control, there is little question that SARS is here to stay for the time being. Now that initial panic is subsiding, many people are stepping back and taking a more objective view of China's present dilemma, some finding the silver lining in this dark cloud. Among those that have found inspiration and are leading the campaign to maintain calm and humor in the face of the deadly disease are the domestic media and Chinese artists.

## "Smile And Retain Smile"

Already a month has passed since the full scale of SARS became clear, and in that time the virus has become a fact of daily life in many cities, especially Beijing. Washing hands several times a day, avoiding crowds, carrying face masks and other prevention tactics have become reflex actions. At the same time, the normalcy of life under the virus has opened the door to more light-hearted looks at the situation, such as a new take on the meaning of SARS — "Smile and Retain Smile."

This revision of the familiar acronym was introduced by the newspaper *Southern Weekend* last week in a large public service ad in its pages. The encouraging, if grammatically dubious, phrase then quickly spread around the country through mobile phone short messages.

Chinese artists, most notably painter and printmaker Zhao Bandi, 37, have also taken to promoting popular optimism. On April 21, Sina.com presented his latest work of art — a print with the theme of fighting SARS and protecting China.

The work shows Zhao and a stuffed toy panda, both wearing large gauze masks. The two are posed behind sandbags and bear machine guns, as if ready to face the "invisible enemy" head-on.

In an interview published on the website around the same time, Zhao explained the work has two main points — one, that the battle against SARS is a tough fight, and two, that keeping a light heart in dealing with the situation is best.

He said, "I am an artist, but I see myself even more as an unusual social worker. I feel a sense of responsibility to society, and I am glad to have the chance to do something in reaction to the SARS situation."

## Nurse's Diary

A survey conducted by Shaohai Market Research Company and published in *Beijing Youth Daily* on May 10 revealed that SARS has improved the public image of China's medical workers.

One nurse has decided to capitalize on this good will by publishing a book that depicts life on the front lines. *Diary of a Head Nurse* — Written in the Anti-SARS Days by Zhang Jihui, head nurse at the



Above, the cover of Zhang Jihui's *Diary of a Head Nurse*. Below, Zhang in the quarantine ward of the No. 1 People's Hospital in Guangzhou. Photo by Yan Liang

No.1 People's Hospital in Guangzhou, was just published by Guangdong Education Publishing House. Edited by reporters from *People's Daily*, the diary was first published in that paper on April 15, after which it earned widespread attention from the public and officials, who thought it would be a timely publication for bookstore shelves.

Zhang joined the anti-SARS effort on the afternoon of February 14, and her diary spans from then until April 1. In that time, the hospital treated 74 SARS patients, and by the last day of the diary 30 had recovered and been discharged. Throughout the time described in

Zhang's journal, she and her colleagues were confined to their hospital.

Her narrative unveils the fear and hope that has filled both medical workers and patients. While sitting for an interview with CCTV in her hospital last week, Zhang recalled seeing Zhao Ziwen, a doctor, take off his glasses as he inserted a breathing tube into a patients' mouth, unphased by the risk of contacting infected fluids.

She also writes of her worst ten days, when the medical staff at her hospital was unable to save a nurse from a nearby hospital and her husband, who contracted the

disease while caring for his wife, orphaning their eight-year-old son. "Some psychiatrists were called in to help us overcome depression after that," Zhang remembered.

Far more encouraging was the day when the first patient's fever broke and he began to recover. "I was overjoyed when I realized we would be able to save SARS victims," she said during the TV interview.

Above all, Zhang's book is about passing on information about treating SARS and showing the sense of responsibility she and the rest of her hospital's medical staff feel towards their patients.

## Moving Movies

Any subject that can capture the public's imagination for weeks on end is likely to end up dramatized somehow, and there are no fewer than five movies and TV series depicting aspects of the SARS crisis currently in filming. Projects include the film *In Nightingale's Name*, produced by Beijing Senwei Film and Television, the film *Not a Minute to Lose* and TV program *White Frontline* co-produced by China Film Group Corporation and Century Hero Film Investment, and a slew of new, SARS-inspired music videos by major pop stars.

Perhaps the least conventional of these offerings is *Zhizhewuluan, Renzhewuju (Intellectuals Never Panic, The Benevolent Never Fear)*, directed by painter and filmmaker Chen Yifei. The 60-second TV short shows many tragedies in modern human history, including the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger in 1986 and the floods that devastated southern China in 1998.

"I don't want to just focus on SARS. These short programs have a deeper theme of the power and dignity of human beings in facing disasters," Chen said in an interview with *Jiefang Daily* last Tuesday.

The documentary *Beijing April* deals more with the realities of the SARS epidemic. The 90-minute program, to be shown on TV channels nationwide, is a look at a group of employees at Beijing Global TV Communication Company as they confront SARS.

The program records the TV workers' reactions, from ignorance and dismissal when they first hear of SARS in Beijing to panic when the extent of its spread becomes clear. In the end, they regain reason and try to calmly deal with the situation.

These reactions reflect the larger experience of the people of this city, according to Liu Xichen, president of Beijing Global TV. "We want this not only to be a memorial of the past April in Beijing, but also a mirror in which people should look at themselves. Doing so will help them deal more rationally with crises that occur in the future," he told *Beijing Today* on Saturday.



Zhao Bandi, with his panda, appears in his new poster against SARS.

**"We want this not only to be a memorial of the past April in Beijing, but also a mirror in which people should look at themselves. Doing so will help them deal more rationally with crises that occur in the future."**

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# Mobile Phone to Ring

By Nebula Dong

Shooting is almost complete on Feng Xiaogang's *Mobile Phone*, scheduled for release at the end of this year, and the film is about to go into post-production, the director told *Beijing Youth Daily* this week.

The film is based on the novel of the same name by Liu Zhenyun. It stars Ge You and Xu Fan, and features a cameo appearance by soap opera star Zhang Guoli.

Since 1998's *Be There or Be Square*, Feng has released a New Year comedy every year. *Mobile Phone*, a film Feng defines as an "anomaly," rather than simply a comedy, tragedy or tragi-comedy, looks set to break this tradition.

"But I don't know what it will turn out like before editing," says Feng, "It is like an unborn child with all possibilities still open."



Ge You on the set of *Mobile Phone*

Photo by Yang Wenjie

## Cats on the Small Screen



By Dong Nan

Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *Cats* has been released on DVD, offering some solace to those distraught fans who now have to wait till the end of the year to see the stage show in Beijing. The production was to have been staged here this month, but has been postponed as a result of the SARS epidemic.

The film version was produced Webber himself, in 1997, featuring an all-star cast including Elaine Paige and Sir John Mills.

*Cats* premiered in London's West End in 1981, and the song *Memory* became an instant worldwide hit. It opened in Shanghai on March 28, racking up 38 performances.



Zhang Ziyi and Feng Yuanzheng

Photo by Zheng Ye

## Purple Butterfly Flies to Cannes

By Dong Nan

The 56th Cannes Film Festival opened Wednesday. Chinese director Lou Ye is participating this year, premiering his new work, *Purple Butterfly*.

The film tells a tragic love story set during World War II, involving a woman who belongs to an underground resistance group known as Purple Butterfly, a Japanese spy master and a Chinese assassin.

Zhang Ziyi, star of Ang Lee's martial arts epic *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and Zhang Yimou's *Hero*, plays heroine Ding Hui. As a contender for this year's best actress award, Zhang is putting the shooting of her current movie *Jasmine* on hold to fly to Cannes next Wednesday.

Renowned Chinese director and actor Jiang Wen is a member of the jury panel assessing feature films at this year's festival, a fact that may boost *Purple Butterfly*'s chances of winning awards.

Yu Lik Wai's *All Tomorrow's Party* and Wang Xiaoshuai's *Drifters* have also been entered in this year's Cannes festival, in the Un Certain Regard section.

## Sing a Happy Tune

By Dong Nan

Nurses at No. 402 Hospital have learnt a new song, written by a doctor at the hospital named Wang Yanqin.

A mother of two seven-year-old children, Wang has worked in a SARS isolation ward for two weeks. She wrote a poem titled *Promise*, describing her feelings about treating SARS patients, and sent it to *Beijing Youth Daily*.

"Enter the battlefield is my choice I don't regret, saving life is

my sacred responsibility," reads Wang's lyric.

Following its publication in *Beijing Youth Daily*, many people set the words to music. The version sung by nurses at No. 402 Hospital was written by Ji-ang Wentao, a 60-year-old musician. After hearing Wang' story and her lyric, he stayed up all night composing music for the song. He said he was more than happy to teach the song to the doctors and nurses at No. 402 Hospital.



Photo by Chen Bai

## WORLDWIDE



### McCartney Diary Gets Back to where it Once Belonged

Two Italian sisters who 20 years ago pilfered a diary belonging to Paul McCartney were rewarded this week with a face-to-face meeting with the ex-Beatle, Italian newspapers reported on Tuesday.

Francesca and Paola De Fazi were 10 and 11 when they broke into a London house where McCartney had once lived. They found a diary from the year 1970, full of notes, drawings and doodles in McCartney's handwriting.



Paul McCartney

Some pages contained references to the break-up of the Beatles, which dominated headlines in Britain that year. (Reuters)

### Sandra Bullock Takes out Restraining Order

A Los Angeles judge has granted a restraining order sought by actress Sandra Bullock against a mentally ill man she says stalked her in three states, according to court documents made public on Monday.

Bullock filed the petition against 34-year-old Thomas James Weldon on Friday. According to the petition, Weldon, has stalked the *Two Weeks Notice* actress for more than a year, causing her "physical or emotional injury."

Weldon, who suffers from paranoid schizophrenia and refuses to take medication, has followed Bullock from California to Texas to South Carolina in an attempt to have a relationship with her, the petition said. (Reuters)



Sandra Bullock



Performers from the Broadway musical *Hairspray*

### Hairspray Leads Tony Awards Nominations

*Hairspray*, a campy musical remake of John Waters's 1988 film, a dance show based on Billy Joel's songs and a Fellini-inspired musical starring Antonio Banderas scooped up the most Tony Award nominations on Monday.

*Hairspray* won 13 nominations. The rollicking, feel-good show about the dreams of disenfranchised teenagers in 1962 Baltimore faces plenty of competition in a 57th annual Tony Awards chase that offers several intriguing races. (Reuters)

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# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Topping Qomolangma

Summits and Deaths by Year  
(www.everestnews.com)

YEAR	SUMMITS	DEATHS
1922	0	7
1924	0	4
1934	0	1
1952	0	1
1953	2	0
1954	0	0
1955	0	0
1956	4	0
1957	0	0
1958	0	0
1959	0	0
1960	3	1
1961	0	0
1962	0	1
1963	6	1
1964	0	1
1965	9	0
1966	0	1
1967	0	0
1968	0	0
1969	0	1
1970	4	8
1971	0	1
1972	0	1
1973	10	1
1974	0	6
1975	15	2
1976	4	1
1977	2	0
1978	25	2
1979	18	6
1980	10	3
1981	5	1
1982	18	11
1983	23	3
1984	17	8
1985	30	7
1986	4	4
1987	2	4
1988	50	10
1989	24	8
1990	72	4
1991	38	2
1992	90	5
1993	129	8
1994	51	5
1995	83	3
1996	98	15
1997	85	9
1998	120	4
1999	117	4
2000	146	2
2001	182	5
2002	159*	3

\* draft number

## Mount Qomolangma History/Facts

**Age of Qomolangma:** around 60 million years.  
**Elevation:** 8,850 meters; the mountain was found to have grown two meters in 1999.  
**Name in Nepal:** Sagarmatha, which means goddess of the sky.  
**Location:** Latitude 27.59' N, Longitude 86.56' E. It's summit ridge separates Nepal and Tibet.  
**First Ascent:** May 29, 1953, by Sir Edmund Hillary, New Zealand, and Tenzing Norgay, Nepal.  
**First Solo Ascent:** August 20, 1980, Reinhold Messner, Italy  
**First Winter Ascent:** February 17, 1980, L.Cichy and K. Wielicki, Poland.  
**First Ascent by Chinese:** May 25, 1960, Qu Yinhua, Wang Fuzhou and Gonpa.  
**First Ascent by a Woman:** May 16, 1975, Junko Tabei, Japan.  
**First Ascent by a Chinese Woman:** May 27, 1975, Pan Duo, North Side.  
**First Oxygenless Ascent:** May 8, 1978, Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler, Australia.  
**Fastest Ascent from South:** Sherpa Babu Chhiri, Nepal – 16 hours and 56 minutes, May 21, 2000.  
**Fastest Ascent from North:** Hans Kammerlander, May 24, 1996, – 16 hours 45 minutes from base camp.  
**First Legally Blind Person to Summit:** Erik Weiheimeyer, May 25, 2001.  
**Most Ascents:** Sherpa Appa, 12 times.  
**Youngest Person to Summit:** Temba Tsheri, 15

years old, Nepal, May 22, 2001.  
**Oldest Person to Summit:** Sherman Bull, 64 years old, May 25, 2001.  
**Country with Most Deaths on Mountain:** Nepal, 46.  
**Most Dangerous Area on Mountain:** Khumbu Ice Fall, 19 deaths.  
**First Ski Descent:** Davo Karnicar, Slovenia, October 7, 2000.  
**Corpses Remaining on Qomolangma:** about 120.  
**Longest Stay on Top:** Babu Chiri Sherpa, 21 and a half hours.  
**Largest Team:** In 1975, China tackled Qomolangma with a 410-member team.  
**Fastest Descent:** In 1988, Jean Marc Boivin, France, descended from the top in just 11 minutes, paragliding.  
**Only Climber to Climb all Four Sides of the Mountain:** Sherpa Kushang, now an instructor with Himlayan Mountaineering Institute.  
**First Person to Hike from Sea Level to Summit, No Oxygen:** May 11, 1990, Tim Macartney Snape, Australian.  
**Largest Number to Reach the Top in One Day:** 40, on May 10, 1993.  
**First Person to Summit Twice:** Nawang Gombu, Nepal, in 1963 and 1965. Gombu now works for the Himalayan mountaineering institute.  
**Mt. Qomolangma rises a few millimeters each year due to geological forces**

By Hou Mingxin

Qomolangma fever has hit the world this month, mostly surrounding the fiftieth anniversary of the first human ascent of the world's tallest mountain. On May 29, 1953, New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay made it to the peak of the mountain called the "Goddess Mother" by the Tibetans. Since then, more than 1,200 people have followed in their footsteps, at least 180 dying in the process.

### Setting Out to Summit

Despite the death toll, over 500 people in 30 expeditions have registered with the Chinese or Nepalese governments for attempts to summit Qolongma during this spring, particularly this month, generally considered the best time of year to climb. The team members hail from more than 20 countries including China, Russia, South Korea, the United States, Japan, France, Germany, Britain, Ireland and South Africa.

### IMG Expedition

International Mountain Guides (IMG), which operates out of Washington State in the US, will lead two Qomolangma attempts this year, one from the North side and one from the South. The southern team consists of six members led by longtime IMG guide and multiple Qomolangma summiter Dave Hahn. They are already on their way up the mountain, though their climb has been stalled by a four-day wind squall.

The North side team has twelve members, with experienced IMG guide and Qomolangma summiter Craig John in the lead. That team is presently training and waiting for appropriate weather to start their assault.

### Russian Adventure Team

A team from Moscow under the leadership of Alexander Abramov will climb the mountain from the Tibetan side. The expedition is part of the new "Russian Adventure Team" project, whose 12 members plan to top the highest peaks on seven continents together. The project started on January 8 when the team made it up 5,642-meter Mount Elbrus in Russia in very harsh weather conditions. On February 28, they conquered their second mountain, 5,895-meter Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Elvira Nasonova, three-time winner of the rare "snow leopard" title, given to the few individuals to climb the five highest peaks in the former Soviet Union, is very likely to join the expedition. Should she reach the top, she will become the oldest Russian ever to climb Qomolangma. She is turning 61 this spring.

### American Ski Expedition

The seven-member team will climb the North Ridge without the aid or porters and without the use of supplemental oxygen tanks. As many members of the expedition will try to hit the summit and then ski down, making them the first North Americans to do so. Reportedly, the team has accepted an invitation to summit with the

Chinese expedition on Saturday, as long as the weather complies.

### Romanian Expedition

Among the members of this expedition, funded by the Romanian government, will be Sherpa Lakpa, the first woman sherpa, or native of the area, to summit Qomolangma twice. This will be her third attempt, putting her on her way to realizing her dream of conquering the mountain 10 times. The team will be accompanied by two cameramen from PRO TV, Romania's most popular TV channel, who will send live footage of the expedition's progress until June 6. The Romanian team is expected to begin its ascent by Sunday.

### Estonian Expedition

This team hopes to go where Estonians have never gone before, the top of Qomolangma. Members have already climbed 8,201-meter Cho Oyu in Tibet and other major world peaks including Kilimanjaro, McKinley in the US, and Broad Peak Rocky Summit in Pakistan. Their plans called for them to hit the summit by today.

### Chinese Expedition

The home team includes nine members, most of whom are amateur climbers, though nearly all have summited peaks over 7,000 meters. The captain and most famous alpinist among them is Wang Yongfeng, who has topped the greatest mountains on seven continents. Advising the team will be coaches and members of the national climbing team and the Tibet climbing school.

If weather conditions are right, the team plans to summit on Saturday, May 17. China Central Television (CCTV) has organized its own team, 83 people strong, to cover the expedition, and will run a high-profile live program called 2003, *Standing at the Third Pole*. CCTV will present unprecedented reports on the headway made by the team through mini satellite dishes installed along their route above 6,500 meters.

### The Brave Sherpas

From the beginning, the smiles and strong backs of the Sherpas have been an integral part of Qomolangma climbing expeditions. Indeed, very few successes have been achieved without them. When Western mountaineers first set their sights on the world's highest peak, they found the Sherpas ideally suited to the rigors of high-altitude climbing: they are unfailingly positive, stout at altitude, and seemingly resistant to cold.

Sherpas did not venture into the high peaks until European mountaineers began arriving to climb Qomolangma, long revered by the Tibetans as an abode of the gods. Although Qomolangma now sees many a human footprint, the Sherpas still regard the mountain as a holy place.

All modern expeditions begin with a Puja ceremony in which Sherpas and other team members leave offerings and pay homage to the gods of the mountain, hoping to remain in their good graces throughout the climb.

Unfortunately, Sherpas were also the first to suffer the consequences that can come from climbing the world's highest peak. An avalanche killed seven Sherpa porters in the 1922 expedition, the first recorded climbing fatalities on the mountain.

Since then, many others have lost their lives on Qomolangma. Of the first 100 recorded Qomolangma fatalities, 41 were Sherpas.

Even after such disasters, however, the Sherpa people remain enthusiastic about taking part in Qomolangma expeditions, which have also become an important source of revenue for these historically poor people.

### Qomolangma's "Death Zone"

In the past 50 years, more than 200 people have died in attempting to reach the top of Qomolangma. Most of the bodies remain on the peak, frozen testaments to the severe and unpredictable conditions of the mountain.

The most famous of the dead is George Mallory, who was last seen on June 8, 1924, about 270 meters below the summit on the mountain's North ridge. Over seven decades later, Mallory's body was found at 8,296 meters on May 22, 1999, but the question of did he actually reach the summit remains a mystery.

Because of the harsh physical conditions in the "death zone" above 7,900 meters, bodies of climbers are rarely taken down the mountain. Most who die do so on the way down.

The worst disaster in the past 50 years came in May 1996, when nine people lost their lives attempting to return from the summit. A bottleneck of climbers at the "Hillary Step", which is a sheer rock face that must be taken in turns, and a terrible storm combined to create the tragedy.

### Call Me "Qomolangma"

The celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the first ascent of the highest peak on Earth is a perfect time for the world to learn the mountain's true name. It is appalling to see that Mount Qomolangma, the serene holy mountain of Tibetans, is still known to the world as Mount Everest due to the ignorance and arrogance of British colonialists of past centuries.

The Tibetan people had called the highest peak of the Himalayas Qomolangma for centuries before the British colonialists attempted to map the mountain.

The mountain was marked as Qomolangma in the official atlas drawn during the reign of Emperor Kangxi in the early 18th century, when the British did not even know of the peak's existence.

In May 1952, one year before New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay made it to the top of the world's highest summit, the Chinese government officially announced that the peak should go by its original name.

Those who genuinely respect the Tibetan people's cultural heritage will have no objection to calling the mountain by that name – Qomolangma.





Fangshan Restaurant

By James Liu

Imperial cuisine, an important component of Beijing's edible heritage, has its origins in the dishes made by palace kitchens for consumption by members of the royal family only. Although every Chinese empire had its own cuisine, the imperial food passed down to today mainly consists of the Shandong, Muslim and Tibetan-style dishes that were major parts of the menu of the elite of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

One of the characteristics that sets imperial cuisine above average fare is strictness in selection of ingredients. For example, mutton dishes can only be made of meat from special, expensive sheep. Seasonal ingredients and dishes are also emphasized. Spring rolls are served to celebrate the coming of spring, while a major ingredient in summer is shrimp.

Since the fall of the Qing Dynasty, chefs confined to the kitchens in the Forbidden City reentered society at large and moved to restaurants serving more common people. However, imperial dishes still met a select audience, as prices were prohibitive for all but the most wealthy members of society.

Today, imperial cuisine remains popular, though it has lost none of its exclusivity. Only the finest ingredients are used in dishes that are exquisitely prepared and presented with light flavors and rich nutrition.

There are around ten restaurants in town that serve authentic imperial cuisine. Some of these eateries not only offer exotic food, but also imperial surroundings to make diners truly feel they are receiving the royal treatment.

#### Tingliguan Restaurant (Pavilion for Listening to Orioles)

The Tingliguan hall in the Summer Palace is where the Empress Dowager Ci Xi used to watch opera. Since its reopening as a restaurant in 1949, Tingliguan has hosted many banquets on behalf of the Chinese government for visiting state guests. It continues to offer some of the best Chinese food and scenery in Beijing.

The restaurants' first chefs came straight from the Forbidden City, and specialized in foods from the banquets served to royal family members on their birthdays. Those masters are gone, of course, but they passed on their skills and secret recipes. Attesting to the kitchen's excellence, Tingliguan has been certified as a national top-level restaurant by the China Food Association.

Besides the birthday banquets, this restaurant is also famed for its "all-fish feast", a smorgasbord of over 50 kinds of fish that is unique in this country. One of the dishes is carp served so fresh that its mouth still moves while diners eat from the back half, which is cooked just through.

The massive restaurant is decorated like a palace and offers unparalleled views of the imperial park. Waitstaff dress in traditional uniforms and can handle sim-

## Royal Food for Common Appetites



Fotiaoqiang, 198 yuan



Imperial dish decorations



Stewed beef in abalone sauce (baozhi niurou)



Braised sea cucumber (shao haishen) ple English orders.

**Add:** Wanshou Mountain, the Summer Palace, Haidian **Open:** 11 am - 2 pm, 5-9 pm **Tel:** 6288 1955 **Average cost:** 80 yuan per person and up

#### Fangshan Restaurant

Another restaurant located in a former imperial playground, Beihai Park, Fangshan serves some of the

Qing emperors' favorites in a truly royal setting. There is a possibility that this eatery will have to leave its treasured location, however, as some members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference have proposed the restaurant move for the better protection of the park, but the final decision has yet to come in.

Fangshan's signature meal is the legendary Man-Han Banquet, a massive dinner consisting of Manchu and Han foods. The huge banquet is made up of 134 hot dishes and 48 cold

to forget the food cooked up in its kitchen staffed with third-generation royal chefs at surprisingly reasonable prices.

The high end of the menu is represented by braised camel foot with sugar (*yuzhang taxue*), which goes for 180 yuan per hoof. Far less expensive is the stewed white eel in rice wine (*huadiao baishan*), sold at 58 yuan per kilogram. The restaurant organizes nightly song and dance shows and is currently offering a 10 percent discount to draw diners.

**Add:** 87 Tiantan Beilu, Chongwen **Open:** 10 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 6701 4263 **Average cost:** 60 yuan per person and up

#### Meiweizhen Restaurant

This is the only imperial restaurant in the Central Business District, and with its imperial banquet lunch has become popular with white collar staff working in the area. It too offers a Man-Han banquet, small in a relative sense with just 108 courses, but its real specialty is Buddha jumping over a wall (*fotiaoqiang*).

This elaborate dish is made from over 20 major ingredients, such as sea cucumber, shark's fin, abalone, pigeon eggs, chicken and duck. Everything is put into a pot, which is then filled with broth, covered with a lotus leaf and simmered for a long time. The dish gets its name because when the pot is opened, the smell could induce even the Buddha to break his meditation and try to get a taste. Mortal diners can try it for 198 yuan for 50 grams.

Another house special is stewed shark's fin in soy sauce (*hongshao yuchi*, 188 yuan). Diners that order abalone (*mizhi baoyu*) receive one free cup of fotiaoqiang.

**Add:** First floor, West wing of China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomen Waidajie, Chaoyang **Open:** 11 am - 2 pm, 5-9 pm **Tel:** 6505 6139 **Average cost:** 150 yuan per person and up

#### Ziyulan Restaurant

Though this is the newest entrant to the city's ranks of imperial restaurants, it does offer an impressive location in an over-100-year-old mansion decorated with authentic period style furniture.

Most of the chefs have been trained by descendants of the last royal chefs and they are capable of working up a full Man-Han banquet. The restaurant closed when the SARS epidemic was first announced, but is expected to reopen at the end of this month.

**Add:** 115 Zhushikou Xidajie, Xuanwu **Open:** 10 am - 10 pm **Tel:** 6316 5068 **Average cost:** 80 yuan per person an up



Photos by Zhuang Jian

## Youzi Youwei Restaurant

By James Liu

From the outside, this restaurant looks like it would serve western food and drink, when in fact its kitchen cooks up completely authentic home-style Chinese dishes.

The menu, printed to read like a traditional Chinese book, fortunately has both Chinese and English, in part because owner Zhou Wanqing likes to practice his language skills. While the dishes are true to their roots, Zhou is working on a new menu that will be less conventional, in part because it will include less pork, which Zhou believes Chinese eat too much. "The new menu will have more beef, mutton and fish and be arranged in western order," he said.

Prices are in the mid-to-low range, with most dishes going for 15 to 40 yuan. House specialty stewed shredded turtle meat with dried scallop (*ganbei qunbiansi*), costs only 38 yuan, despite its high-quality ingredients. Another recommended dish is braised cow tendons (*shuijing tijin*, 26 yuan), again about half the price at many other restaurants.

To complete a meal, the restaurant also sells rice wine (*huangjiu*) made on the premises at 15 yuan per flagon.

**Add:** 308 Andingmen Neidajie, Dongcheng

**Open:** 10 am - 10 pm

**Tel:** 6403 5653

**Average cost:** 30 yuan per person



Stir-fried tofu (baozhi doufu), 12 yuan



Grilled beef steak (jian niuliji), 22 yuan

## Summer at the Astor Grill Outdoor Terrace

By James Liu

Considering it may be truly beneficial to health to eat outside this summer, the opening of the Outdoor Terrace at the Astor Grill in the St. Regis Beijing hotel could not be more timely. Now local diners have a reach choice for a place to go to get fresh air and delicious, up-market food.

The terrace was opened last Saturday and will serve lunch and dinner seven days a week for the rest of the summer. The menu for the Outdoor Terrace is all-new for this year, offering a wide range of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts. Set menus are also available, costing 118 yuan plus 15 percent surcharge on weekdays and 98 yuan plus surcharge for a two-to-four course meal on weekends.

A highlight of the new menu is a range of ice teas, all created by the expert mixologists of the Astor Grill. Offerings run from the classic to more exotic choices, such as tropical tea punch and Moroccan iced tea, though all go for 48 yuan each.

**Add:** 1 Jianguomen Waidajie, Chaoyang

**Open:** 11 am - 2 pm, 5:30-11 pm

**Tel:** 6460 6688 ext. 2637/2711

**Average cost:** 118 yuan per person





# SARS Survivors May Face Lasting Lung Injury, Doctors Report

About 10 percent of SARS survivors appear to be left with lung damage that renders them unable to perform routine tasks without struggling for breath, doctors in Hong Kong reported last week.

Although most patients stricken by SARS are believed to recover fully, the report marks the first time researchers have found that some who survive may have to contend with permanent breathing problems.

The revelation adds to the growing recognition that SARS is among the most dangerous lung infections, rivaling such a scourge as tuberculosis. The report comes just days after the World Health Organization (WHO) doubled its estimate of the death rate from SARS to about 15 percent overall, far higher than the mortality rates of most other respiratory illnesses.

"The numbers are pretty nasty," said Ian Simpson, a spokesman for the WHO. "It's less infectious than a disease like influenza but has a more serious impact on those who do get infected."

Because SARS is so new, some of the most basic information about the illness, such as how to treat it, how long people are sick, how many

victims recover, and whether it can cause long-term health problems, has been unknown. But the first answers have begun to become clear in recent weeks as doctors have gotten more experience with the illness.

During a news briefing in Hong Kong last Saturday, doctors and public health officials provided the most detailed description yet of the new lung infection's typical course. Hong Kong is among the cities hit hardest by SARS, and physicians there have had more experience with the disease than their counterparts anywhere outside southern China.

Although doctors in Hong Kong have been using treatments whose value is questioned by some other clinicians, experts agree that their experience is providing crucial information for doctors everywhere.

"Hong Kong is the front line," Simpson said.

In their assessment yesterday, Hong Kong health authorities said SARS follows a pattern with three distinct phases, each lasting about a week.

In the first, "viral replicative phase," the virus reproduces rapidly in a victim's

body, causing a high fever and flu-like symptoms. During this stage, doctors in Hong Kong have been prescribing the antiviral drugs ribavirin and Kaletra, although neither has been proved effective. Kaletra is a combination of two so-called protease inhibitors used to treat AIDS.

In the second, "immune hyperactive phase," a victim's immune system recognizes the invasive microbe and mounts a counterattack. Doctors now believe that much of the damage caused by the infection is not the result of the virus destroying lung cells directly but of tissue destruction resulting from the immune response.

"The immune system is actually damaging to the lung tissue," said Yeoh Eng-kiong, Hong Kong's secretary for health, welfare and food.

As a result, doctors in Hong Kong have begun giving patients steroids during this phase, instead of immediately, as they had been doing at first. Hong Kong doctors believe the steroids may minimize lung damage by damping down the immune system's response. The practice, however, is unproven, and other experts have advised against it, saying it may be dangerous.

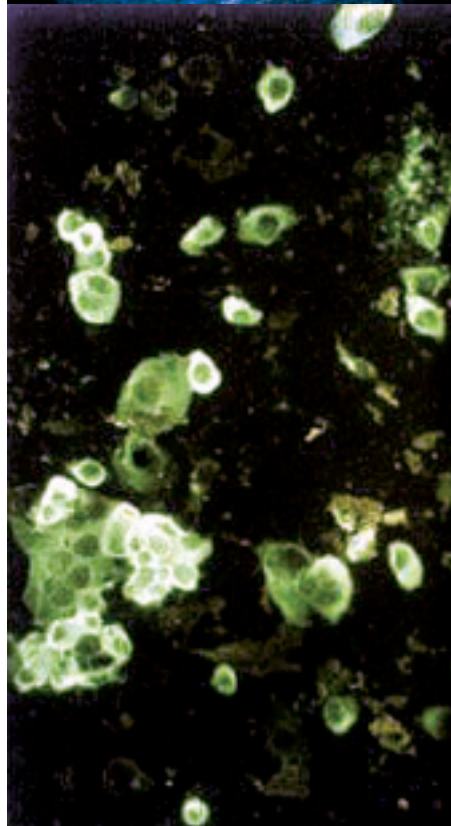
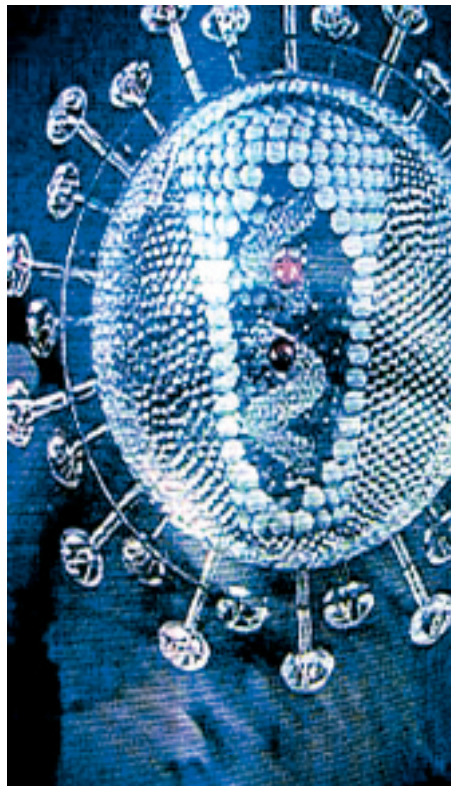
About 80 percent of patients recover after the second phase, but the remaining 20 percent go on to a third, life-threatening "pulmonary destruction phase." That is when patients experience intense lung tissue damage. Most require intensive care, a respirator and oxygen to help them breathe. Some patients in Hong Kong are also getting other drugs to suppress their immune systems.

Doctors have now determined that about 10 percent of all infected patients seem to suffer continued breathing problems.

"Some of these patients will still have a cough, and they will tend to get shortness of breath more easily," Yeoh said. "This will certainly affect their ability to do exercise, and if they want to return to work sometimes they might find it hard to do so."

As a result, doctors have started a respiratory rehabilitation program to help survivors' lungs recover. It remains unclear, however, whether the damage will ever fully heal even with rehabilitative therapy, and whether that 10 percent figure for long-term damage will change as doctors get more experience.

(Washington Post)



Above:  
**CCTV reveals the coronary virus that causes SARS**  
(newsphoto.com.cn)  
Below:  
**Microscopic view of human cells (darker) being infected with the SARS virus (lighter)**  
(AP)

## Studies of SARS Virus Survival

Scientists in the World Health Organization (WHO) network of collaborating laboratories yesterday reported results of the first scientific studies designed to determine the survival time of the SARS virus in different environments. Results from studies of the effectiveness of different disinfectants commonly used in hospitals were also reported, confirming the validity of currently recommended measures for infection control.

The new studies, conducted in Hong Kong, Japan and Germany confirm, as anticipated, that the SARS virus can survive after drying on plastic surfaces for up to 48 hours.

Scientists have also tested virus survival times in faeces. Research conducted at one Hong Kong lab determined that the virus can survive in faeces for at least two days, and in urine for at least 24 hours. Studies conducted at a second Hong Kong lab found that the virus in faeces taken from patients suffering from diarrhea could survive for four days. However, the dose of virus needed to cause infection remains unknown. And further studies are needed before firm conclusions about the role of faecal-oral transmission can be made.

Results of the new studies underscore the need for frequent hand washing, proper cleaning, and good disinfection control in hospitals managing SARS cases. Spread by infected droplets remains the most important mode of transmission.

Shedding of the SARS virus in faeces, respiratory secretions, and urine is now well-established. In Hong Kong in late March, a large and sudden cluster of more than 320 simultaneous cases occurred among residents of the Amoy Gardens housing estate. The outbreak raised the possibility of an environmental source of infection. Subsequent investigations suggested that contamination with sewage might have played a role. Around 66% of Amoy Gardens SARS patients presented with diarrhea as a symptom, compared with 2% to 7% of cases in other outbreaks. With the exception of the Amoy Gardens cluster and a previous event where cases were linked to visits to a single floor of a hotel, SARS is thought to spread in the majority of cases through close person-to-person exposure to infected droplets expelled during coughing or sneezing.

All previous speculation about the environmental behavior of the SARS virus was based on knowledge about other well-known human members of the coronavirus family, which cause illnesses such as the common cold. The WHO has been concerned that the SARS virus, which is unlike any other human or animal virus in its family, might behave differently. The WHO also remains concerned that the SARS virus continues to be transmitted to hospital staff in highly advanced settings where sophisticated infection control measures are in place. (WHO)

## Survey of SARS Genome Shows No Big Mutations

The first major study of the genome of the SARS virus shows that it has not mutated significantly in its spread to different countries.

But the experts said the findings also meant that SARS, unlike some other new and emerging diseases, had not weakened as it passed through successive generations. Some experts had expressed hope that the virus would cause less severe illness as it spread.

Also, in a report on the outbreak in Singapore, the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said that five people had acted as "super-spreaders" in passing the virus to 144 other people, while 81 percent of infected people did not transmit to anyone else. CDC defined superspreaders as individuals who transmit-

ted SARS to 10 or more other people. Doctors have described superspreaders in other infections like tuberculosis, rubella and Ebola.

The genome study, by Dr. Edison T. Liu and his team in Singapore, involved comparing the complete genomes of SARS viruses from nine cases. It was published in The Lancet, a British medical journal.

Dr. Earl G. Brown, a virologist at the University of Ottawa, said: "I hope that SARS will change, but I'm concerned. This virus seems to be happy with the genes it's got."

Dr. Brown, in a commentary on the study in The Lancet, suggested that because the SARS virus had changed relatively little in its first few months, it seemed unlikely it would mutate into a

milder form.

Dr. Brown said that if a new virus was going to evolve into a more benign form, it normally did so in the early months of an outbreak, a pattern followed by the Ebola virus, which causes a deadly hemorrhagic fever.

"Ebola transmits like wildfire in hospitals and among family members for two or three transmissions and then loses the ability to infect people," Dr. Brown said. "It loses the ability to spread and keep its virulence, and burns out on its own."

The WHO has said the SARS virus, which is a newly discovered member of the coronavirus family, is the cause of SARS. But the agency and other scientists agree that more work needs to be done to be

certain. Scientists know that other coronaviruses have a high rate of mutation and so they say that it is far too soon to know whether the SARS virus will change to cause milder, or even more severe, illness, or become a seasonal disease, like influenza and other coronaviruses.

Dr. Heymann said that the epidemic of SARS appeared to be waning, though not conquered, in all affected countries except China and Taiwan.

Epidemiologists are trying to determine what conditions would be necessary to declare SARS an endemic disease and give up trying to eradicate it. The WHO is also trying to find all the chains of transmission in China since the disease began, presumably in Guangdong last November. (CDC)

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Zizhuyuan Park

## Major Parks and Gardens

By Helen Hong

**Yuyuantan Park** (玉渊潭)  
Lying between the West Third Ring Road and Sanlihe Lu, Yuyuantan park occupies over 140 hectares, of which lakes and waterways cover 61 hectares. Once a fishing spot for royal family members, the park is these days a popular retreat from the busy city.

Bayi Lake reflects the nearby CCTV tower, and is usually dotted with flotillas of small paddle boats. The bank is lined with flowers and trees, and on the northern shore is an oriental cherry garden, where some 2,000 cherry trees blossom in spring.

On the east bank of the lake, is a garden named Liuchunyuán, or Garden of Eternal Spring. Near the south bank of the lake is the Song Qingling Children's Park.

*Where: Between the West Third Ring Road and Sanlihe Lu, to the north of the Military Museum and the Millennium Monument. Open: 6 am – 8 pm Admission: 2 yuan*

**Taoranting Park** (陶然亭)  
Pavilions have always been a feature of China's parks and gardens, and Taoranting Park is one of the best places to see pavilions of a variety of styles. The park has held the reputation of being "capital scenic spot" since its establishment in 1952 and attracts numerous visitors with both its ancient Chinese architecture and modern garden art.

*Where: 19 Taipingjīe, Xuanwu Open: 6 am – 9:30 pm Admission: 2 yuan*

**Zizhuyuan Park** (紫竹院)  
Zizhuyuan, or Purple Bamboo Park, is a relatively small member of Beijing's pantheon of parks, but it is one of the most charming, with its southern style scenery and bamboo gardens. Water occupies one third of the area of the park, and Nanchang and Shuangzi rivers run through it. Some 100 varieties of bamboo can be found here, in what the park's administration describes as the largest bamboo park in north China.

*Where: 45 Baishiqiao Lu, Haidian Open: 6 am – 8:30 pm Admission: 2 yuan*

**Beihai Park** (北海)  
Built during the Liao Dynasty, Beihai was a royal garden in the Jin, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties.

*Where: 1 Wenjinjīe, Xicheng Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 10 yuan*

**Beijing Botanical Garden** (北京植物园)  
There are almost 340,000 plants of over 5,000 varieties, spread over an area of 533 hectares.

*Where: Wofu temple, Xiangshan, Haidian Open: 7 – 5 pm Admission: 10 yuan Tel: 6259 1283*

**Temple of Heaven** (天坛)  
An architectural masterpiece in terms of structure and aesthetics, the Temple of Heaven was used by emperors in the Ming and Qing dynasties to offer prayers to the gods.

*Where: Tiantan Beilu, Chongwen Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 15 yuan*

**Xiangshan Park** (Fragrant Hills 香山)  
With a long history as a royal garden, the most famous scenery at Xiangshan Park is the red autumn leaves.

*Where: 40 Maimaijīe, Haidian Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 10 yuan*

**Summer Palace:**  
A summer retreat for the members of the royal family, the Summer Palace is one of Beijing's top tourist attractions.

*Where: Haidian Open: 6 am – 7 pm Admission: 30 yuan*

**Zhongshan Park** (中山公园)  
Right in the center of Beijing, this park was used to present offerings to the Earth God in the Ming and Qing dynasties.

*Where: west of Tian'anmen, Dongcheng Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 3 yuan*

*Options for weekend activities are somewhat curtailed for Beijingers in these days of SARS-induced restrictions. Although getting out of town is not really an option currently, the city's numerous parks offer all the fresh air you can breath and some respite for those suffering from 'cabin fever.'*

# Take a

# Deep Breath



Zizhuyuan Park

## Parks by District

By Zhang Bo

### Dongcheng District

**Qingnianhu Park** (青年湖公园)  
Covering an area of 17 hectares, Qingnianhu Park features natural garden scenery and original architecture.

*Where: Andeli Beijie, Dongcheng Open: 6 am – 9:30 pm Admission: 1 yuan*

**Ditan Park** (地坛公园)  
Ditan, or Temple of Earth, is where the emperors made offerings to the Earth God. The park is renowned for the harmonious design of the altar, temple and garden.

*Where: 2 Andingmenwai Dajie. Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 3 yuan*

**Liuyin Park** (柳荫公园)  
Liuyin Park, or Willow Shadow Park, is the only park in Beijing featuring typical rural landscape. There are more than 30 kinds of willow trees growing here.

*Where: 8 Huangsi Dajie Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 1 yuan*

**Nanguan Park** (南馆公园)  
Nanguan Park was rebuilt recently, increasing the area of its grassland by some 5,000 square meters.

*Where: Zhenxian Hutong (针线胡同), Bei Xiaojie (北小街). Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 1 yuan*

### Xicheng District

**Rendinghu Park** (人定湖公园)  
Standing on the south side of Huangsi Dajie (黄寺大街), Rendinghu Park was built in 1996. The total area of the park is nine hectares, half of which is covered by water.

Gardens and fountains here are of European style and lawns in the park are dotted with numerous sculptures.

*Where: 15 Liupukang, Ande Lu (安德路六铺炕) Open am – 9:30 pm Admission: 0.3 yuan*

**Yuetan Park** (月坛公园)  
Yuetan Park is where the emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties made offerings to the God of the Moon. There are numerous ancient buildings and gardens to be found here.

*Where: Yuetan Beijie, Xicheng Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 1 yuan*

### Chongwen District

**Longtan Park** (龙潭公园)  
Longtan (Dragon Pool) Park lies just east of the Temple of Heaven. In keeping with its name, the buildings and sights here are all, nominally at least, dragon related, such as Dragon Pavilion, Dragon Hill and Dragon Pool. There are also carvings of dragons in more than 100 trees around the park. There is an outdoor bird market the banks of the lake, attracting both buyers and onlookers.

*Where: 8 Longtan Lu Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 2 yuan*

**Longtan Xihu Park** (龙潭西湖公园)  
Longtan Xihu (West Lake) Park borders Longtan Park.

*Where: About 10 minutes walk west of Longtan Park Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: free*

**Ming Dynasty City Wall Park** (明城墙遗址公园)  
The Ming Dynasty City Wall Park extends from Chongwenmen to Dongbianmen, on the East Second Ring Road.

*Where: Between Chongwenmen Dajie and Beijing-zhan Xijie Open: 24 hours Admission: free*

**Yuting Park** (玉蜓公园)  
Once a dirty and disorderly bird market, Yuting Park features a large green area alongside a railway line, covering an area of 3.7 hectares.

*Where: Between Yuting Qiao (玉蜓桥) and Jingtai Qiao (景泰桥) along the North Second Ring Road. Open: 24 hours Admission: free*

### Xuanwu District

**Wanshou Park** (万寿公园)  
Wanshou Park is a popular place for local practitioners of Tai Ji. There are several facilities built specially for the elderly; Lüzhū Yuan (绿竹苑) is a garden for reading, drawing and playing chess and Qinfang Garden (沁芳园), near the east gate of the park, is where people can walk with their bird cages and chat with one another.

Covering an area of 4.7 hectares, the park was once the site of Guandi Temple and several old pine trees are well preserved here.

*Where: 29 Baizhifang Dongjie, Xuanwu Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 1 yuan*

**Xuanwu Yiyuan** (宣武艺园)  
A newly built park, Xuanwu Yiyuan features several classical style gardens. Jingya Garden (静雅园) and Dingxiang Shuzhai (Lilac Study 丁香书斋) are the main scenic spots here.

*Where: South of Huaibaishu Jie (槐柏树街), Xuanwu Open: 6 am – 9 pm Admission: 1 yuan*

**Binhe Park** (滨河公园)  
Covering an area of three hectares, Binhe Park lies in the central business area of Xuanwu District. Baiyun Temple (白云观), a Taoist temple, is nearby.

*Where: Between Baizhifang Qiao (白纸坊桥) and Tianningsi Qiao (天宁寺桥) on the Second Ring Road. Open: 24 hours Admission: free*

*(Continued next week)*



Taoranting Park

Photos by Cui Hao